

**An
introduction
to teaching**

H. C. BARNARD

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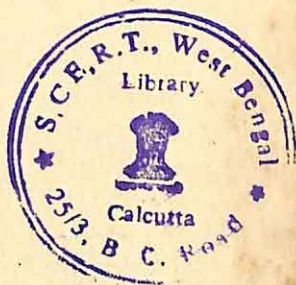
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An introduction to
TEACHING

H. C. BARNARD

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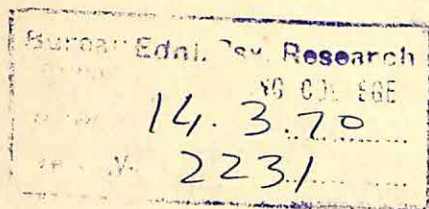
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Preface

This book is designed primarily for the young teacher or the student in training, but it may also prove helpful to those who are considering teaching as a career. It does not profess to be a compendium of 'tips for teachers'; although it emphasises practical matters, it tries to put them in a philosophical perspective. It is concerned mainly – though not exclusively – with the education of children at the secondary stage; and it may be used to accompany a course on 'Principles and Practice of Education', or 'Education – General Course', such as is given in a University Department or a Training College; but it is hoped that the fully-fledged teacher may also find it of interest, and perhaps even of assistance. As far as possible the discussion of educational principles and practice is illustrated by actual examples.

Since the English language unfortunately possesses no epicene personal pronouns, the word 'he', when used in reference to a teacher or pupil, must normally be understood as applying to either sex. Similarly, 'headmaster' is to be taken as a noun of common gender, unless the context shows clearly that it is masculine. A slight complication also arises from the fact that the Government office responsible for national education has successively been known as the Board of Education, the Ministry of Education, and the Department of Education and Science. As far as possible an attempt has been made to use the appropriate term in any given context.

PREFACE

At the end of each chapter is appended a short bibliography which may assist further reading. Many of the works mentioned contain additional book-lists to which reference may be made. The books suggested are such as may be obtained in the library of any Training College or University Education Department or Area Training Institute.

I am glad to acknowledge the expert and willing assistance which I have received during the writing of this book from the library staff of the Reading Institute of Education – Miss K. R. Matheson, B.A., F.L.A., Miss J. E. Grew, M.A., A.L.A., and Mr. G. W. Geoghegan, B.A., A.L.A. I also wish to thank my wife for her kindness in reading the proofs and for many valuable suggestions.

When treating of the history of education I have expressed my deep indebtedness to the inspiration and friendship of the late Professor J. W. Adamson. Similarly, in my present attempt to deal with educational theory and practice I would like to salute the memory of Sir John Adams, Sir Percy Nunn and Sir Fred Clarke, and to acknowledge how much, during my professional career, I have owed not only to their writings, but also to their personal interest, kindness and help.

1952

H. C. B.

The necessity of having this book re-set and a new edition prepared has given me the opportunity of bringing it as far as possible up-to-date and inserting some new material.

1965

H. C. B.

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THE TEACHER

CHAPTER I

Material considerations

There are various considerations which may determine a young man or woman to choose teaching as a career. The financial rewards which it offers compare on the whole unfavourably with those which are often attainable in other professions; but at any rate it affords a competence and a reasonable security of tenure. Before 1919 there were no standard rates of pay, and education authorities or governing bodies made their own arrangements, so that those which were most wealthy attracted the best teachers. Even so, salaries as a rule were very low and increment rates very inadequate. But the scales worked out by the Burnham Committee, and brought into operation between 1919 and 1921, eased the situation and established standards which were accepted by all the parties concerned. Originally the scales for teachers in 'elementary' schools were lower than those for their colleagues in 'secondary' schools; but this anomaly was rectified in 1945, when a single basic scale for all qualified teachers was introduced, and extra allowances were added for special qualifications or duties.

The Burnham scales have not escaped criticism on various grounds. In particular it is argued that they tend to encourage mediocrity and immobility. Compared with other professions, teaching offers very few 'prizes' for its able and

more highly qualified members. If a man does really distinguished work as a *teacher*, the only way to reward him is to make him a headmaster; and then his work will be very largely administrative and it may even prove difficult for him to do any teaching. It might perhaps be advantageous if in the teaching profession there could be a system of grades with proficiency bars, such as exists in the Civil Service or in the Armed Forces. Annual increments inside a grade would be possible; but there would always be the incentive of promotion to a higher grade with an increased salary range; and at the top there might be some really well-paid posts to which a teacher, who was eminent in his own craft and not as an administrator, might aspire. This would not mean that such appointments would be confined to those who take sixth forms in grammar schools. The teacher who does distinguished work in a nursery school, the contriver and inspirer of important educational experiments in a modern school, the brilliant pioneer in a technical school – all these alike would be eligible for the higher ranks of the teaching service. The development of a system of special allowances is already helping somewhat to ease this situation; but there is still some way to go before teaching can offer prospects open to members of the other professions.

The salary of a headmaster or headmistress, as a result of the revised arrangements introduced in 1945, depends in some measure on an elaborate system of 'unit totals', in which pupils over the age of 15 are assessed at much higher rates than those under this age. This reintroduction of a 'capitation' system, which was not uncommon in days gone by, was regarded by many people as a retrograde step. The actual size of a school under modern conditions depends very little on the efforts of the headmaster. Fluctuations of population, due to the movements or the fortunes of local

industries, may have considerable repercussions on the size of the neighbouring schools; and for that reason the number of pupils in them may decrease in spite of all the efforts of their heads. It should be noted, too, that each pupil under 13 counts as only one unit of the head's salary, whereas those between 15 and 16 count four units, between 16 and 17 six units, and over 17 ten units. This fact may – consciously or not – tempt him to persuade senior pupils to stay on at school. That they should do so may be – and often is – a most excellent thing; but it is unfortunate that something good in itself should be tied up with considerations which may not be so admirable. In any case, headships, especially in secondary schools, are hard to obtain. As in any other profession, the subordinate posts very greatly outnumber the more responsible ones. But apart from this – again in the secondary school particularly – there are certain types of teacher who are doing essential work of first-class quality, but who would be unlikely to obtain a headship. Such are specialists in physical training, art or music, or non-graduates, or teachers over the age of forty. All these considerations are of importance to those who are contemplating a lifelong career in teaching.

A teacher can retire from service at the age of 60, but he may be allowed, if he wishes, to stay on till 70. In any case he will be entitled to a pension. This is paid direct by the Paymaster-General, and not through a local education authority or a governing body, as is the case with salary. The pension rights are secured by the Teachers (Superannuation) Acts. The amount of the annual pension is calculated on the basis of $\frac{1}{80}$ of the average salary for the last three years of service, multiplied by the total number of years spent in the profession. Moreover, a lump sum is also given. This again is based on the average salary of the

last three years of service; and the formula for calculating it is $\frac{x}{80}$ of the average salary $+\frac{3y}{80}$ of the average salary, where x = the number of years of service before Oct. 1st, 1956, and y = the number of years in the profession since that date. It must be remembered that the teacher's pension – unlike that of members of the Civil Service and the Armed Forces – is contributory. Throughout his career 6% of his salary is deducted towards superannuation, and he is not permitted to contract out of this arrangement. Breakdown allowances, short service gratuities and death gratuities are payable under certain circumstances; but the amounts which may be claimed tend to be small. At least they help to mitigate the difficulties of a profession in which substantial savings are not possible.

In spite of this fact and of the protection which the superannuation arrangements afford, the teacher will be well advised to take up some additional form of insurance. Every man, in particular, who may possibly assume family responsibilities, should insure his life; and the earlier this is done, the lower the premiums will be. The teacher should also insure against sickness and accident – contingencies which the government superannuation scheme covers to only a limited extent. The various professional societies provide facilities for teachers to take up these insurances at reduced rates.¹ Some of these organisations also give help in the buying of houses, or provide endowment policies for the education of children. Professional societies not only give assistance in salary negotiations and in services such as those to which reference has just been made, but they also promote the personal welfare of teachers and the best interests of children and of schools. This fact furnishes a strong reason why every member of the profession should join a society of

¹ See *infra*, p. 200.

this kind. It is often advantageous to do so while one is a student, because no subscription – or only a nominal one – is required at this stage; and yet the help derived from membership even then may be considerable.

The prospect of a regular, if not generous, salary, and of a pension on retirement, may prove an important factor in one's decision to adopt teaching as a career. But another consideration is the long holidays which are enjoyed by the teacher, as compared with those in other walks of life. The purpose and nature of these holidays are perhaps often misunderstood by those who know little about the teacher's work. It is a pity that they cannot be set in charge of a class of 30 or 40 lively youngsters for seven periods a day and for five days a week. One wonders whether, at the end of a thirteen-week term, the critic might not have changed his mind and be ready to agree that the teacher (and the class) needs some period of rest and refreshment before facing another similar experience. Teaching is trying work, and much virtue goes out of the schoolmaster who is really worth his salt. Periods when one can renew one's resources are necessary if the best work is to be done.

All the same, the teacher should not – and normally does not – regard school holidays as times of idleness. One cannot continually give out without having periodic opportunities for taking in. The holidays should be a time for the teacher to widen and deepen his outlook, to read and to think, to plan and to experiment. He must prepare for the next term's work. From time to time he will attend vacation courses, not necessarily in those subjects in which he is professionally concerned, but perhaps in some outside interest which may afford his mind a freshness which will permeate his work and make him all the better teacher of his speciality. Or perhaps he may read for some further qualification, or take part in

some camp or expedition organised by the school in which he serves. All these changes of occupation which are made possible by periodic 'holidays' may well prove times of refreshing, and should be regarded not as breaks or blanks in his professional career, but as an integral part of it.

For the school-leaver of an academic type, who has had a good career in the sixth form, the prospect of becoming a teacher is attractive often because it offers opportunities for developing those intellectual interests which are beginning to prove so satisfying. This is particularly the case, perhaps, with those who go on to the university, and there read for a specialised degree in one subject, or in a group of allied subjects. Teaching may certainly have rather doubtful claims to be regarded as one of the 'learned professions'; but there will always be room for this type of candidate, especially in the grammar school. All the same, in the writer's experience, there tends to be in university education departments too large a proportion of students who are attracted to teaching for this reason only or mainly; and who tend to regard teaching itself as a means to this end. Naturally they do not as a rule make the best teachers, though some may discover their *métier* in the long run. For these reasons it is important that those who choose, or are advised, to take up teaching, should consider what are the real requirements of the profession, apart from the considerations of salary, pension, holidays, academic study and the rest. Our next task, therefore, will be to discuss these requirements.

For reference

Burnham Committee: *Scales of Salaries for Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools* (England and Wales) H.M.S.O.

C. E. Bridges, *The Teacher's Legal Handbook*; Art. 'Superannuation.'

Ministry of Education, *Notes for Intending Teachers*.

Ministry of Education, *A Career in Education for University Graduates*.

Nuffield College, *The Teaching Profession today and tomorrow*.

H.M.S.O., *Teachers (Superannuation) Acts*.

H.M.S.O., *Recognised Establishments in the Training of Teachers in England and Wales*.

CHAPTER 2

Professional considerations

There is a close affinity between the course of training for the intending teacher and that which is followed in a theological college by the candidate for the ministry of the Church. Both courses are built up on, or closely allied to, an academic or theoretical course; but both aim at applying this in dealing with human beings. The specialised professional training has in neither case any particular magic of its own; it cannot guarantee to make either a good parson or an effective teacher. Unless the theological student has certain initial qualifications – *e.g.* faith, a cultivated intelligence, a strong sense of vocation, sympathy, zeal, and so on – his college can do little for him. What it can do is to help him to apply these qualities to the special work at which he is aiming. Similarly, no course at a training college or in a university can *per se* make a good teacher. Ultimately one learns to teach by teaching. This fact is no justification for the obscurantist view, which even yet lingers in some quarters, that the teacher alone among professional men needs no special training for his work. There are doubtless ‘teachers by the grace of God’, and on the other hand it is more than possible that we have not yet devised the best methods of training. But because there may be some effective unqualified and unregistered dentists still in practice no one in his senses uses this as an argument that dentists need not undergo a rigorous training, or that there is some virtue in their having

an amateur status. So also with teachers. No progress in their art is possible if they have to rely for their techniques simply on what they can remember of their own school days. The training institution exists in order to further the study of education, as well as to train its students. But if they possess already certain qualities it can help – like the theological college – to make these explicit, to direct and develop them, to widen the candidate's experience and give him opportunities of realising and tackling problems which will inevitably present themselves in the career which lies ahead. It will be well therefore to consider the initial qualities which are to be desired in the intending teacher.

The schoolboy who wrote in his essay 'Teaching is a vacation' may be forgiven for having provided the enemy with an occasion to blaspheme. But he probably meant well. Teaching should be regarded primarily and above all things as not merely a job, or even a profession, but in addition as a vocation. This means that the aspirant to teaching should have chosen this work not by chance but deliberately, because he realises that it is *good* work. It affords unique opportunities for social service, and it brings one into close and constant contact with human nature in one of its most attractive forms. The term 'service', of late years especially, has tended too exclusively to be associated with the activities of the armed forces; but 'peace hath her victories no less renowned than war', and the achievements of those who serve society in their peaceful avocations, though not so spectacular, may be none the less real. Teaching is surely such a service. For that reason, like marriage, it is 'not by any to be enterprised, nor taken in hand, unadvisedly or lightly . . . but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God'. It will be well if the teacher, no less than the parson, should have heard the call 'Whom shall I send,

and who will go for us?' and should have made the response 'Here am I; send me.'¹ These considerations are of the first importance; but, as with many matters of that kind, the average Englishman feels a certain diffidence about referring to them. So the teacher will not parade his sense of vocation. It will be sufficient if he keeps it at the back of his mind or the bottom of his heart.

As has already been indicated, another quality of first importance to the teacher is an interest in human beings – especially in children. Sir John Adams was fond of reminding us that the Latin verb *doceo* takes two accusatives – one of the person and one of the thing. *E.g.* 'I teach John Latin.' For centuries the main interest in the teaching process had been in the thing taught; and this emphasis is not infrequently in evidence even in these enlightened days. But there were always a few educationists – *voces clamantes in deserto* – who questioned the method. The greatness of Rousseau as an educational theorist consists in the fact that, in spite of all his exaggerations and paradoxes and absurdities, he switched the emphasis once and for all to the other accusative – the *person*. However much practice may have lagged behind theory, no educational thinker has ever since questioned the rightness of this contention. It is the basis of the modern development of child-study and the application of psychology to education. It implies that no one has a right to become a teacher unless he loves children and is interested in them and is anxious to serve them. It may be difficult to keep on that level; but for those who try to do so there are great rewards.

Another desideratum for the teacher is patience. Fortunately for some of us it is a virtue that can be cultivated.

¹ F. D. Maurice suggested that teachers ought to be ordained to their special ministry.

Teaching, as has been said, is very exacting work – far more so than the general public imagines. To have to wrestle with seemingly invincible ignorance may be the lot of any teacher. The C and D streams have to be taught as well as the A stream. But you will be more effective if you try to understand, and even to sympathise, than if you shout and bully (if you are a man), or nag and grouse (if you are a woman). To keep an even temper in the class-room sometimes requires severe self-control; but it is worth while always and unflinchingly to try to cultivate it. Again, the teacher has need of patience not only in dealing with his pupils, but in the whole routine of school life. If one may be allowed a mixed metaphor, he is hedged round by machinery; and much of the machinery will not be of his own making. But it is presumably there for a purpose; and the teacher's own life – as well as that of the head with whom he has to work – will be the easier if he recognises this and does not chafe unduly. The best run schools have the least machinery; but there are schools of various kinds and they all have to be staffed.

Intellectual ability and a good range of intellectual interests are of great importance to the teacher. He need not be a 'scholar', in the technical sense; though to take sixth-form work in a grammar school, which is practically at the university level, demands academic attainments of no mean order. But every teacher should bring to his work a well-stocked, alert and orderly mind, and the power to express his knowledge clearly. The degree course in the university, or the academic part of the training college course, should have gone some way towards providing the necessary background; but no initial equipment of this sort is too good for the teacher. This implies also that he must continually be renewing this equipment. He can never cease to be a student. Of

him, as of the Clerk of Oxenford, it should be said 'Gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche'. There are endless ways of refreshing and widening one's intellectual interests. The teacher should be continually in touch with developments in his own special subject and in professional techniques. He should read the current educational press; he should make full use of the educational library which his Area Institute – or some similar organisation – provides; he should build up (as does a doctor or a lawyer) a library of professional books of his own, and make full use of them in order to broaden his outlook and improve his teaching methods.

But though an interest in academic and professional matters is important for the teacher, it is equally desirable that he, almost more than any other kind of practitioner, should have a wide range of interests outside these special studies. The nursery school teacher may be interested in brass-rubbing or playing the 'cello; the mistress in the primary school may study Italian in her spare time; the modern schoolmaster may cultivate an interest in philosophy; the classical specialist in the grammar school may make a hobby of astronomy or collect butterflies. However remote the outside interest may seem from one's own particular type of teaching, yet it may often vivify a lesson or illustrate a point. Teaching is not like lecturing in a university. It is a much more intimate contact of mind with mind; and that lesson goes ahead best where the teacher can bring forth out of his treasure things new and old. There is of course always the possibility of becoming too diffuse, and of being distracted from the point at issue; but if there is order and aim in the teaching, that risk will be avoided.

Teaching by its very nature tends to be a narrowing occupation unless one guards against this insidious danger. We are shut up in our own classrooms, serving our own

particular school, dealing with the same set of children. There is often little chance to enlarge our experience. Yet it is of the first importance that we should so do. Widening and deepening one's academic studies, improving one's professional techniques, cultivating hobbies, are in themselves excellent; but they are not enough. The teacher should profit by any opportunity to enter fully into the life of the community in which he lives. It may afford experiences which will help him to develop a balanced judgment and a sense of proportion – virtues in which he is sometimes conspicuously lacking. If the teacher is a man he can join the local rugger club or become a freemason or a rotarian or a member of the church choir. The schoolmistress can interest herself in the Townswomen's Guild or play in the symphony orchestra or belong to the dramatic society. Such activities will help to bring the teacher out of his or her professional isolation and into the circle of congenial people in other walks of life. Marriage of course affords many opportunities of this kind. The married teacher is a householder and lives in a family, and he is therefore bound to play his part in the community. A large proportion of men teachers are married, and the increasing employment of married women to meet the shortage of teachers is a tendency to be welcomed.

It is perhaps more characteristic of women teachers than of men that they form their friendships mainly among members of their own profession. It is not uncommon for them to share lodgings and even to take their holidays together. Under such conditions it is difficult to avoid talking shop and to get one's mind off one's work. And yet complete relaxation and refreshment are needed from time to time if one is to do one's best work. If a schoolmistress has to share lodgings it would be well to do so with a woman in some

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entirely different walk of life – *e.g.* the civil service or business. Life in a boarding-house has its drawbacks; but at any rate it brings together people with varying interests. For similar reasons there are disadvantages in living at home with one's parents. This arrangement often appeals to young women, partly perhaps on grounds of economy, and partly through a sense of duty. But it is of vital importance to the teacher to avoid any kind of environment which may be narrowing. We are perhaps getting rid of the bad old inbreeding system whereby the clever child, who had worked through the primary school, went on to a secondary school in the same area, and thence to a neighbouring training college, filled with students all having the same local background. When qualified, the candidate entered the teaching service of the authority which was responsible for the training college; and if she was a woman she probably went back to live with her parents. After she had taught for some years in one or two schools in the town, the local education authority appointed her to a headmistress-ship. Thus the teacher's whole life was spent in one environment, and a profession which in itself is inevitably narrowing was rendered far more so by conditions which in many cases were encouraged by local authorities themselves.

It should be the aim of every teacher to widen his experience as much as possible. It would be well for him to go to a university or training college at some distance from his home town. At some time in his career he should, if he can, serve in different, and contrasting, parts of the country. If he is a northerner he will discover that southerners are not so 'smarmy' and unenergetic and unreliable as he has sometimes been led to believe. If he is a southerner he will come to realise that northern independence does not necessarily imply a lack of good manners, and that in Lancashire and

Yorkshire they do think about other things besides making money. He will be a far better teacher for having found his feet and gone abroad in the world a little before settling down to a more steady and responsible post in a particular school, where he may eventually become one of the really important figures.

Next to width of interests and variety of experience we would desire for the teacher professional pride in his work. Teaching is not merely a 'rule of thumb' business. It is a craft; and, like every other craft, it implies doing or making something in the light of intelligent and well thought-out theory. To make a chest-of-drawers, to perform a surgical operation, to paint a picture, to play a piano sonata – all these are, or should be 'works of art'. They are expressions of the cabinet-maker's, surgeon's, painter's, pianist's craft. In the same way the lesson should be regarded as a work of art – an expression of the teacher's craft. The more difficult it is, the greater the challenge to his professional skill. He is not in school to teach only the bright and intelligent, but also the less bright and the lazy and inattentive. How far he succeeds with the latter is the real test of his competence as a craftsman. Moreover, dealing with the more difficult situations gives him the most valuable kind of teaching experience. For this reason he should not avoid such work, but rather welcome it as an opportunity to test – and perhaps increase – his ability as a teacher. He should cultivate the attitude of the doctor who is glad to encounter a really difficult case and is less interested in the hypochondriac. Why should we be surprised if we heard the teacher say: 'I've got a splendidly stupid class this term'; or: 'My lower Third are delightfully inattentive and noisy'? If one can face and solve problems like that one has proved one's competence.

Finally – though many other qualities might be listed – it may be hoped that the teacher will bring to his work methodicalness and attention to detail. If things are to be done in a special way or by a certain time all members of the school staff must co-operate. For example, nothing is more galling to an overworked head (*experto crede!*) than to ask from twenty-five or thirty members of his staff a return of some kind which is required by a specified date by the Department of Education and Science or the local education authority and to receive the necessary details from all of his colleagues except one. The whole return is held up owing to the dilatoriness of a single person. Punctuality is another virtue which weighs much with headmasters and headmistresses. Disorder and bad discipline are as often due to lack of punctuality and promptness on the part of the staff as to original sin on the part of the pupils.

Unless a teacher is happy in his work he will be well advised to switch over to some other career. But even if he possesses all the qualities which have been listed he may not find it always easy to make full use of them. At times he may be tempted to lose courage and to question whether, after all, his labours are worth while. The narrowing, mechanised framework of the teacher's professional life, the performance of the same or similar duties year in and year out, the triviality of so much of the daily round, may damp the enthusiasm with which he entered upon his career. In short, he may suffer from what the monks and nuns of old called *accidia*. The teacher's life is not so circumscribed as theirs, but there are points of resemblance. Even in these days we tend to be too cloistered in the schoolroom, and our routine has something in common with the regular recitation of the offices and the ordered sequence of duties in the monastery or the convent. It was not surprising that the pristine

enthusiasm and devotion, with which novices made their profession, sometimes flagged, and they began to question the purpose and value and effectiveness of what they said and did. The teacher will be lucky if he escapes periods of this kind during his career. But there is no doubt that parsons, doctors, nurses, and all other workers whose service, like the teacher's, is at once human and divine, have similar experiences. The remedy is to remind oneself of the meaning of service and of vocation. The success of our work may seem to fall far below the amount of effort and thought which we expend; but, as a seventeenth-century French educationist once said, 'There is this consolation in the work which one undertakes for God, that He asks of us the work itself, and not its success.'¹ A bricklayer, who is building a wall, can use his plumbline and spirit-level to test the efficiency of what he is doing. But it is unwise to judge teaching solely by outward effects or by examination results. Paul may plant and Apollos may water; but the increase comes from elsewhere. So the teacher, whose job is not just to make children learn French or arithmetic or qualify for a certificate, but to help them to become worthy and honourable members of society, must go on in faith. But it must really be faith, and not doubt or even nonchalance – still less self-satisfaction.

For further reading

Romans xii.

W. James, *Talks to Teachers* (second part).

D'Arcy W. Thompson, *Daydreams of a Schoolmaster*.

H. C. Dent, *To be a Teacher*.

A. C. Benson, *The Schoolmaster*.

W. Sharwood Smith, *The Faith of a Schoolmaster*.

A. de Sélincourt, *The Young Schoolmaster*.

D. W. Hackman, *First Year Up*.

¹ N. Fontaine, *Mémoires sur MM. de Port-Royal*, p. 195.

AN INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING

Ian Hay, *The Lighter Side of School Life*.

Novels dealing with school life.

Biographies of great teachers - *e.g.* Thomas Arnold, Edward Thring, F. W. Sanderson, Dorothea Beale, Frances Mary Buss, Sara Burstall.

THE CHILD

CHAPTER 3

Boys and girls. Psychological and intellectual sex-differences

One of the most important results of the development of educational theory has been the abandonment of the idea that the child is a 'homunculus' – a man writ small, whose education should be based on something thought out on adult lines and provided *a priori*. Thinkers like Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and their modern followers have made it clear that teaching must be based on child-study; we must find out what sort of creature we have to deal with, and accommodate our methods to the laws of his nature. The plant metaphor has often been used. We must understand the nature of our plants if we are to nurture them successfully. We must know how they are organised and how they function, the sort of soil and situation which suits each variety best, the amount of moisture or fertiliser which is indicated, the general conditions which are most desirable. The more we know about the plant the better gardeners we shall be; and, similarly, the more we know about children the better equipped shall we be to educate them.

Human nature is so complex that individuals differ fundamentally one from another; and this means that not only must we study 'children', but that every child is a study in

itself, and the teaching problem must be re-thought out in each individual case. But there is one conspicuous line of demarcation among our pupils due to the fact that some are boys and some are girls. This might seem to give us some fairly constant and consistent contrasts in the raw material with which we have to deal; though it should be borne in mind that the intellectual and psychological differences between boys and girls may be less marked and less significant than is sometimes suggested.

To take first psychological sex-differences: these may be implicit from the first; boy babies, for example, are said to be less placid than girl babies. As children emerge from sheer babyhood these differences tend to become more definite, though boys and girls are of course far more alike than they are at the post-puberty stage. Generalities always imply the existence of many exceptions; but the differences may perhaps be summed up by saying that little boys are like puppy-dogs and little girls like kittens. (It is not a necessary corollary that the parallelism persists into adult life, though there may be an element of truth in that too.) Little boys are full of energy, mischievous in an open and whole-hearted way. Their attention is quickly attracted and they poke their noses in everywhere. They are very serious about what interests them, especially about things that move or work, but their interest may soon flag. They are destructive and noisy, lacking in imagination and sympathy. They like getting dirty and muddy and rumpled and untidy – just like puppies; and they are also most attractively simple and direct and affectionate. Little girls on the other hand – like kittens – are delightful creatures, so graceful and playful. They have the most engaging ways, and even if sometimes they are a little shy at first they make very attractive friends. But there tends often to be something about them which

remains unexplained and unexplored. This difference is, as a very broad generality, true of boys and girls at any stage. A boy's motives are as a rule fairly obvious; you can guess how he will react and what he will do. But a girl – and, for that matter, a woman too – remains something of a mystery. Freud, in one of his lectures on psycho-analysis, addressing the women in his audience, said: 'The problem of woman has puzzled people of every kind . . . you are the riddle yourselves.'¹ So if the boy is simple, the girl is complex; the springs of her actions are less easily understood and forecast. She reminds you of the kitten who is intent on stalking a bird, and suddenly, without warning, surprises you by sitting down and washing itself. It is the privilege of cats, as well as of women, to change their minds.² This would imply that, as Freud suggests, men may find it difficult really to understand women; but there are undoubtedly many women who understand men – perhaps better than the men themselves suspect. And it is unquestioned that there are plenty of women teachers of little boys and little girls who find their boy pupils more easy to understand and to teach than their girl pupils. That opinion has been repeatedly expressed to the writer by women teachers of small children. It is a fact of importance in the consideration of questions concerning the teaching, at the infant and junior stage particularly, of boys by women, or of girls by men.

The element of inscrutability tends to increase as the girl grows older. It is associated with that passivity which is ultimately a kind of sexual protection,³ and a counter balance to the instinct of sexual attraction, which comes into prominence in girls after puberty, and which leads to so

¹ S. Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, p. 145.

² 'Varium et mutabile semper Femina.' (Virgil, *Æneid* iv, 569).

³ See H. Deutsch, *Psychology of Women*, Vol. I, p. 114, *et passim*.

many female practices which may seem curious – or even censurable – to the pedant or the puritan, but are not altogether inexplicable to the philosopher or the scientist. Boys certainly tend to be pugnacious, aggressive, self-assertive; but girls have a greater interest in the social aspects of the self and they are more inclined to introspection.¹ The sense of value of the individual self, in this aspect, seems normally to be more highly developed in them than in boys. For example, the boy – at any rate until well after puberty – does not as a rule worry greatly about his personal appearance or his sense of dignity. He does not mind being ‘ragged’ by his schoolmaster, so long as this is done in a friendly way; though boys hate and resent sarcasm. But it would be dangerous to treat a girl in this way; she might sullenly shut up like an oyster or just possibly burst into tears and you might have forfeited her confidence and esteem for ever.

Again, the herd instinct is more developed in boys than in girls. It is dogs, and not cats, that go about in ‘gangs’; and here the parallelism with boys and girls is once more in evidence. In that amusing and penetrating study of a gang, *Emil und die Detektive* (which has been translated into English and adapted as a film), all the active participants are boys; and the one girl, Pony, is a kind of camp-follower who cycles about with messages and provides coffee for the members of the gang. Stanley Hall² says that the ‘gang’ stage is particularly in evidence from the ages of 11 to 15, and that boys tend to imitate social units characteristic of the lower stages of human evolution; he instances pirates, robbers and soldiers. After this stage these wilder instincts may be transmuted into athleticism; but if they remain at the ‘gang’ level

¹ See W. D. Wall, *The Adolescent Child*, p. 78.

² *Adolescence*, Vol. I, p. 360. See also Furfey, *The Gang Age*.

they may degenerate into real anti-social activities and result in sheer hooliganism. That may afford a relevant argument for providing playing-fields and other recreational facilities for adolescents who have just left school, and for the development of county colleges. Gangs of girls, as has been said, are much less common than gangs of boys. The girl tends to form individual friendships; it is she, and not the boy, who speaks of 'my girl friend' and 'my boy friend'. It also seems true that she is more ready to take suggestion from adults – *e.g.* to join societies organised by adults for her benefit; and that she is more easily governed by adult and altruistic motives in forming these organisations. If so, this would again illustrate the girl's greater interest in the social aspects of the self; and it may also help to explain the fact that girls' schools tend more often to be over-organised than boys' schools.

A possible corollary is that team-games, in which the individual is lost in the side, may be psychologically better suited to boys than to girls. (The *physical* value of team-games, is of course, not in question here.) The house-system may also be a more masculine than feminine institution. This point may be illustrated by the difference between the average hockey game as played by boys and by girls. The former is a team game; whereas the latter often tends to be largely a series of individual encounters. Fortunately most girls' schools of today base their procedure on educational principles – a study of the pupils themselves – and not on a preconceived tradition; and they therefore experiment with methods which seem best suited to the feminine genius. This is not likely to be achieved by simply imitating boys' schools.

We proceed now to consider intellectual sex-differences. It is a general experience, borne out by results of experiment, that boys are more logical than girls. Their powers of

reasoning and abstract thinking are usually more developed and they tend to be more interested in cause and effect. It is the little boy, rather than the little girl, who is continually asking 'Why?' In an inquiry in which a group of boys and girls were asked to write down in confidence the questions to which they would most like to know the answer, it was found that the boys' problems were largely concerned with objective fact – current affairs, scientific information, and the like; whereas the girls were mainly interested in problems of direct personal and social reference – in many cases problems of sex-behaviour.¹ Anthony Martienssen tells a story of two schoolgirls who were driven off in an army lorry – and afterwards their murdered bodies were found in a neighbouring wood. The group of children who watched their departure were afterwards questioned by the police. 'It was an interesting fact,' says the author, 'that the school-girls remembered and described accurately the driver's face and appearance, but could not recollect what the lorry had been like.'² The boys, on the other hand, hardly saw the driver – he was 'just an ordinary soldier'; but they described the lorry in detail and had noticed that its hood was lower than the driver's cabin; they even remembered the regimental markings on the mudguard. We are not surprised therefore that boys, as a rule, are more successful at purely abstract or objective subjects, such as mathematics and physics, which involve an application of logical methods, or which stress physical or mechanical processes.

But if the girl is usually less apt than her brother at mathematics or science, or less able to follow a train of exact reasoning and think abstractly, or is less interested in

¹ See W. D. Wall, *The Adolescent Child*, pp. 21–22. Refer also to V. Klein, *The Feminine Character*, ch. vii.

² A. Martienssen, *Crime and the Police*, p. 135.

machinery, she tends to surpass him in other fields. She excels at learning and memory work. Her gift of intuition – ‘the most striking feminine characteristic’¹ – not infrequently scores when the boy’s powers of reasoning break down. She may find it difficult to deal with abstract thought, or to think out a human problem in a detached way, but she has marvellous powers of imagination. The boy – at any rate until well into the adolescent stage – tends to despise emotion or sentiment and to be somewhat uncomfortable about it; or rather he hates being suspected of an emotion or sentiment which he may feel deeply.² But the girl often has great gifts of inner perception. For this reason she may, more readily than a boy, be able to appreciate literature which deals with human situations often expressed in an emotional way. Her work in English and foreign languages may compare favourably with that of the boy, whose powers of appreciation tend to come later – at the sixth form or university stage. In art and music, and often too in those parts of history which particularly call for the exercise of imagination, girls frequently excel. These differences of intellectual approach may mean that boys and girls tend to be attracted by different aspects of the same subjects. For example, in geography boys may be more interested in isotherms and the polar front, and girls in human geography. If, therefore, boys and girls are working together in a co-educational school the outlook of both may be broadened, and each sex may contribute something to the other. In any case the girl may learn from the boy’s greater readiness to experiment and his bolder approach to intellectual problems; while the boy may benefit from the girl’s conscientious

¹ H. Deutsch, *Psychology of Women*, Vol. I, p. 107.

² Cf. Kipling’s story of the ‘Gadarene Swine’ in *Stalky and Co.*

industry, intuitive insight, and appreciation of beauty in many forms.

In view of what has been said it may appear curious that even in the realms of sentiment and imagination women rarely take the highest places. There are no female Shakespeares or Miltons or Keatses; no female Raphaels or Da Vincis or Turners; no female Bachs or Beethovens or Brahmses. The remarks made above referred only to boys and girls; and the imaginative powers of the male sex tend to develop late; but it may possibly be true that from the sheer intellectual point of view the cleverest men outnumber the cleverest women. At the same time it would seem proved that on the whole the ability of women, as measured by tests of general intelligence, is not inferior to that of men. The differences may be due partly to social tradition, custom and opportunity; and partly to the fact that a woman often has much greater difficulty in reconciling the opposing claims of married life and professional work. But as regards boys and girls it would seem that boys tend to go to the extremes; for example, both mental deficiency and super-normal intelligence are slightly more common among boys than among girls.¹ In a survey made in Scotland of the general intelligence of the 11 to 12 age group, it was found that 4.25% of the boys and 3.3% of the girls achieved more than 59 marks; whereas 8.07% of the boys and only 6.36% of the girls scored less than 10. This tendency was confirmed by a second investigation carried out in 1947.² But though this general fact seems to be established, it remains true that individual differences in intellectual ability within each sex are far more marked than

¹ See Sir Cyril Burt, *The Backward Child*, p. 81.

² See *The Trend of Scottish Intelligence*, pp. 85-86. Refer also to *Intelligence of Scottish Children* (1933).

such differences between the sexes. If therefore a differentiation of curriculum as between boys and girls is to be justified it may have to be argued more on psychological than on purely intellectual considerations; and in any case a marked differentiation would hardly seem to be indicated.

Is it desirable, then, that separate curricula for boys and girls should be instituted? The old 'elementary' school course was based on the three 'Rs', and in many such schools boys and girls were educated together right up to the leaving age. Problems of school organisation made much differentiation difficult; and all that could normally be done was to provide needlework and housecraft for girls, while the boys did handicrafts or gardening. On the other hand, down to the middle of the nineteenth century, and in many cases for long afterwards, the curriculum for girls of the middle and upper classes was considerably differentiated from that of boys. Girls were taught a smattering of general knowledge, gained usually from compendia of the catechism type, together with 'accomplishments' – French, Italian, music, dancing, drawing, painting, and some instruction in needlework and, perhaps, the domestic arts. The severer disciplines of classics and mathematics were left mainly to the boys. But some of the most successful pioneers of the movement for the higher education of women, in the middle of the nineteenth century, contended that the sexes were intellectually equal; what boys could do, girls could do. In many of the new girls' secondary schools, therefore, which sprang up especially after the appearance of the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission of 1868, the curriculum of the contemporary boys' schools was adopted, with a few possible omissions, and with the addition of some artistic and domestic subjects. Public examinations were also opened to girls and young women on the same terms as to boys and young men; and

this again helped to stereotype curricula in the girls' schools. Before the reform of the first school examination what were called 'Group IV' subjects (including music, art, handicrafts, and domestic science) might be offered for the school certificate, but were not allowed to be counted towards exemption from matriculation. It is significant to note that the movement to secure full parity of Group IV subjects with those of other groups was consistently advocated by the Association of Headmistresses, though for long it was opposed by the Headmasters. Today in the General Certificate of Education all subjects are optional; but there may none the less remain a danger lest, in their desire to give adequate weight to those subjects which are perhaps psychologically, as well as intellectually, suited to girls, headmistresses be tempted to overload the curriculum. After all, what is equally needed for both boys and girls alike is a good general education; though this does not imply that all pupils must follow exactly the same course.

For further reading

W. D. Wall, *The Adolescent Child*.

Dame Olive Wheeler, *The Adventure of Youth*.

C. M. Fleming, *Adolescence*.

Stella Churchill, *The Adolescent and the Family*.

A. P. Jephcott, *Girls Growing Up*.

J. Newsome, *The Education of Girls*.

Board of Education, Report of the Consultative Committee on
*Differentiation of the Curriculum for Boys and Girls respectively in
Secondary Schools*.

National Union of Teachers, *The Curriculum of the Secondary School*.

CHAPTER 4

The relation of boys and girls to the family, the school, and one another. Co-education

The differences between the sexes, whether psychological or intellectual, are not contradictory, but complementary. Together they give humanity a richness which one sex alone could never supply. Since, then, each sex has its own view of life and its own special gifts, its own contribution to the sum-total of human nature, boys and girls, and men and women, are bound to gain experience of educative value from each other's society. Getting to know a member of the opposite sex should be like a visit to a foreign country or doing a piece of research. Steele said of Lady Elizabeth Hastings that to love her was a liberal education. How are we, as teachers, to help our boys and girls to obtain such experiences in the best and easiest ways? If they grow up together in the same home, and the home is a sensible one, the problem is as good as solved for us already. Constant action and reaction help each to understand the other's point of view, and a wise parent can do much tactfully to strengthen sympathy and explain difficulties. The relationship between brother and sister is not the same as that between boys and girls who are not of the same family; but a brother has the great advantage of meeting his sister's friends on equal terms – or the sister her brother's friends –

and this tends to break down the shyness or awkwardness which may exist between children of opposite sexes. If the teacher is consulted on this point he should advise parents to let their sons have opportunities of meeting their daughter's friends (or *vice versa*) in an open, honest, ordinary way; and never to suggest that this is of necessity linked in the slightest degree with sentimentality. That stage may arrive eventually but it should come naturally and spontaneously. Given a good home, children in a family where there are both boys and girls enter upon life with a great initial advantage.

But the teacher will also have to deal with, or advise in respect to, the only child, or the boy (girl) who has only sisters (brothers). If the parents are wise they will have cultivated the friendship of a family in which there are both boys and girls of about the same age as their own offspring. In such a setting an only child may be able to assume something, at any rate, of the attitude of the brothers towards their sisters – or *vice versa* – and so acquire a normal and frank outlook on members of the other sex. Wherever possible these relations should be developed by means of the family, and no other institution can quite take its place; but it is obvious that something must now be said about co-education – a means by which boys and girls are brought into close contact through the school, where they must perforce have a powerful influence on one another.

In some schools the pupils include both boys and girls, but the sexes are grouped in separate classes. This is not co-education to any significant degree; and we shall confine ourselves to the system in which boys and girls are taught together – except, perhaps, for specialised subjects such as handicrafts, domestic science and physical education, and for the major team-games. It will be remembered that little boys were said to be psychologically simpler than little girls,

and that women often find it easier to understand them, and therefore to teach them, although they themselves have never had the experience of being little boys. This seems a strong argument for putting little boys and little girls together at the stage when psychological sex-differences are not so marked as they later become. Co-education under women teachers is obviously sound for the infant school or the kindergarten, where wise care of children is more needed than formal teaching; and also probably in the junior school – though there are men teachers (especially if they are also parents) who can do good work here. At the pre-puberty stage boys and girls are aware of no great differences of instincts and tastes. At the other end of the scale are university or college students who are very definitely conscious of such differences, but who are mature enough to understand them, and therefore to respect them and even to value them. So here again co-education is obviously justified. Even Oxford and Cambridge, with their strong masculine, monastic and collegiate tradition, are now (to some extent at any rate) co-educational universities; and the two-sex training college for teachers is today by no means unknown.

The case for co-education at the secondary school stage may be less clear. Boys and girls have been educated together for centuries up to the school-leaving age (whatever that happened to be) in many of the old 'elementary' schools; and nobody worried about this. After the passing of the 1902 Education Act a fair proportion of the new secondary schools founded by local education authorities were also co-educational. But this was normally not the outcome of any educational principle, but was due simply to a desire for economy. A mixed school of ordinary size, especially in country districts or areas of scattered population, is run more

cheaply than two small separate one-sex schools. All the same, the problem of co-education has always been keenly debated in respect of the grammar school. Most of the books dealing with co-education at this stage are the work of convinced advocates; and the opposing view has been 'written up' to a less degree. It is certainly true that, in the writer's experience, those who have taught, or have been pupils, in co-educational schools are for the most part strongly in favour of the system. But it is not very easy to view the problem dispassionately. An attempt will therefore be made to state and to discuss the chief objections which are sometimes urged against co-education for pupils at the secondary-school stage.

First, as it affects the teacher. Teaching is not simply the imparting of knowledge; it is a free, vital contact between mind and mind. To a schoolmaster one of the great attractions of his work is that he can be a man and a brother to his boys; he can handle them without restraint or embarrassment, and he can answer their questions freely and fairly. If they want to know what the word 'circumcision' means or what exactly was the manner of Macduff's birth – questions which they have a perfect right to ask – it is his business to give information as fully as is necessary. Any schoolmistress, too, who was worth her salt, could tackle such questions if put by a class of girls. But, it is argued, such explanations might be difficult for the teacher of a mixed class of adolescent boys and girls. The difficulty is largely due to taboos, and in an ideal state of society it might not arise; but as things are it remains. Yet the objection is surely magnified. The occasions when situations of the type described arise are in practice quite rare; and in the school of today, where sex-information is often given quite unemotionally in the biology lesson, the problem may be mitigated. It remains

possibly true that a sort of spiritual solidarity between a schoolmaster and his boys, or between a schoolmistress and her girls, makes for a sympathy and an understanding which is at the basis of effective teaching. But in any case the mixed school contains staff, as well as pupils, of both sexes; so that what is lost in one way may perhaps be made up in another.

A somewhat stronger objection to co-education in the secondary school concerns more directly the pupils. There is a general tendency for boys and girls to react differently towards school work. If a boy is given too much work to do, the chance is that he will leave some of it unfinished; whereas if the girl has too much she will probably try to do all of it and suffer as a result. Both physiological and psychological research have shown that girls at the adolescent stage on the whole are more liable to physical and mental fatigue than boys.¹ This tendency to greater conscientiousness, coupled with less power of endurance, may also be true of women, as well as of girls, so far as mental work is concerned. The writer was once told by an education official for one of the largest English counties that, of all the breakdowns among teachers in the employ of his authority, no less than 87% were among schoolmistresses; and these were very largely nervous breakdowns. So also with their pupils. It is easier to overwork a girl than a boy; and at the same time it is even more undesirable to overwork a girl than a boy – especially in those all-important adolescent years covered by the secondary school course. Yet in many households the girl carries an extra burden from which the boy is largely, if not wholly, exempt. She is expected to take her share of the home duties in addition to the claims of her school work. All this means that as puberty approaches the girl in school needs particu-

¹ See especially *Differentiation of Curricula between the Sexes in Secondary Schools* (Board of Education), p. 120 *et passim*.

larly careful and considerate treatment. So, of course, does the boy, but on the whole his case is simpler. Once puberty is established there are times when, to say the least, it is exceedingly unwise to overburden the girl with mental work; and yet it is more easy to do this than in the case of the boy. All this means that if boys and girls are working together in a class, the spirit of competition, combined with the girl's natural disposition to be more conscientious than the boy, may urge her on when she ought to be taking things easily. This fact is not necessarily an argument against co-education, but it lays a special responsibility upon the teacher in a mixed school.

Those who deprecate co-education in the secondary school often stress a possible difficulty which may arise out of the relation between pupils and teachers of opposite sexes. A feature of the life of adolescent girls is the curious 'pash' or 'crush' which they sometimes conceive for an individual schoolmistress, and which can be exceedingly irritating to the object of this adoration. Fortunately these bouts of *Schwärmerei* do not last long, and the sentiment is soon transferred to a more worthy object. But if a female teacher finds such attentions a nuisance, they would be far more embarrassing to a schoolmaster who is in charge of a mixed form. The sentimental attachment of a girl to a mistress can be handled with tact by the woman concerned. But a master in a mixed school could hardly tackle such a situation by himself. Perhaps the senior mistress could deal with the girl. But here, again, the magnitude of the danger indicated is perhaps much exaggerated by the opponents of co-education. Such incidents *do* occur, and the writer has come across examples of them. The problem also is not really confined to girls – as we are reminded by the case of 'Young Woodley'. The daily association of boys and girls together in class

and outside it must obviously make for that ease and understanding which ideally – as has been said – should begin in the family. But it is sometimes argued that familiarity breeds not contempt, but indifference. According to Stanley Hall, 'There is a little charm and bloom rubbed off the ideal of girlhood by close contact, and boyhood seems less ideal to girls at close range. In place of the mystic attraction of the other sex that has inspired so much that is best in the world, familiar *camaraderie* brings a little disenchantment.'¹ This statement may appear somewhat dated; but the writer was once told an anecdote by the headmaster of a secondary school in Finland, which may bear out Stanley Hall's contention – or, perhaps, provide an answer to it. This school, like all others in that country, was a co-educational one, and the pupils were arranging a Christmas dance. The senior boys came to the headmaster to ask if they might invite some girls to this. He pointed out that, as the dance was open to all the members of the school, there would be plenty of girls. 'Oh no,' said the boys, 'We mean *real* girls!'

It might be argued that the most useful and sensible type of co-educational school is the boarding school which takes both boys and girls as pupils. Such schools exist and are doing very useful and interesting work. One of the chief criticisms of the one-sex boarding-school is its monastic or conventual character, and the lack of opportunities which it affords for easy and natural contacts with children of the opposite sex. But where boys and girls are not only taught together, but are also in the fullest sense members of the same school community and contribute to the same corporate life, there is to some extent a replica of the family on a large scale. That

¹ *Adolescence*, Vol. II, pp. 620–21; but see also W. D. Wall, *The Adolescent Child*, p. 144, and B. A. Howard, *The Mixed School*, pp. 70 ff. and 80 ff.

may be all to the good; but its very largeness tends to dilute its effectiveness, and not even the co-educational boarding-school can really replace the life of the good and sensible family. There still remains the contention that co-education tends too much to feminise adolescent boys, who need the more bracing atmosphere of a one-sex school and the control of men teachers. Someone has said that co-education is indicated for girls and contra-indicated for boys; but if that were true it would obviously be a *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole question. Perhaps the final answer is that there is plenty of room for both mixed and one-sex schools; and that some children benefit most from the former, and others from the latter.

The attitude of boys and girls to one another raises special problems as they pass the age of puberty and enter upon adolescence. It is then that the awakening of sex-instincts tends to make them regard each other in a new light and with a new interest. This is all very normal and natural; but, as with other instincts which are normal and natural, a certain amount of restraint and guidance is necessary if we are to fit in with the state of society in which we find ourselves. The parent should be the person best fitted to give the guidance; but the teacher can help, and may, in default of the parent, be wholly responsible. We are now thinking of pupils in the secondary school, and particularly, perhaps, in the grammar school. It seems that boys and girls of this type tend to approach their problem from two rather different angles.

To consider the girls first: among all races the age of puberty is younger for girls than for boys. In north-west Europe its onset occurs in girls about 12 to 14, and in boys about 14 to 16. The change also takes place rather more slowly in boys than in girls. The result is that at the age of 14 a girl will probably be sexually full-grown with the

periodic signs of womanhood fully established; but the boy may have to wait to 16 years before he is physically a man. This means that in a group of boys and girls of secondary school age, meeting one another and associating at home or at school, a greater proportion of the girls than of the boys will be sexually alive – a fact which is sometimes overlooked, but which is extremely important. It is quite natural, therefore, that girls even while they are still at school tend to be more conscious of what one might call the ‘love interest’ than boys.¹ Sentimental stories or films make a greater appeal to them; they become interested in boys and instinctively use their powers of attraction; and they cherish dreams of getting married some day and of living happily ever afterwards.

In the case of the majority of boys the sex development is not complete until about the time when their secondary education comes to an end. But, whether the boy leaves school at the age of 15 or whether he is a grammar school pupil and stays on to 16, or even to 18 and proceeds to some form of higher education, he has still his whole career to make. He must give his first and most serious attention to what will be his life-work; and everything may depend on the use which he makes of the first five or ten years after leaving school. Girls, of course, also have to pass examinations and go out into jobs; and for those whose formal education has gone furthest there sometimes arises the problem of deciding between the claims of marriage and of a professional career. But in most cases the career is not so utterly vital as it is with the boy. The girl always has the hope that sooner or later someone else will take over from her the task of earning a living, and that her work thenceforward will be to make and administer a home. That she is

¹ See A. P. Jephcott, *Girls Growing up*, *passim*.

justified in her hope is proved by statistics. According to the census of 1961, about one seventh of the women over 45 in England and Wales remained unmarried. But the boy's job is for life. Unless he has private means the possibility of marriage for him depends on his making a success of his career.

This necessity may not be so pressing with boys whose education ends at 15 and who go into some form of industry which does not demand the acquisition of great skill or a long apprenticeship. By the time a boy of that type is 21 or 22, he is probably as efficient as he ever will be, and he may be earning as much as he will get at 40. But the boy, from whatever type of secondary school he comes, who has still a long period of probation or preparation, to serve, is in a different position. It is obviously most desirable that such boys should be able to associate freely, in an open and unaffected way, with girls; but it may be unwise for them to become prematurely interested in individual girls. At their age it is best, perhaps, not to specialise. There need be nothing wrong or unseemly or even undesirable in some degree of specialisation; but it does tend to distract a boy's attention at a time when he should be giving his mind to laying the foundations of his career. Headmasters may be inclined to feel that in these circumstances the girls are sometimes more of a nuisance than the boys; if so, there are biological reasons for this. But it is of little use to try to tackle the problem by resorting to prohibitions, or even punishments. That will only aggravate the problem and drive it underground. The situation calls for tactful and sympathetic handling on the teacher's part, and a frank and friendly talk with the young people concerned, pointing out the considerations which have already been stressed. It will be fortunate if the authorities of the boys' school and the girls'

school concerned can discuss the problem and co-operate in a sensible way. Too often they remain in watertight compartments – and that may be another argument in favour of the mixed school. But in any serious case the school should get into touch with the parents and explain the situation and enlist their help. It is easy to exaggerate the seriousness of these episodes or tendencies, and often the right course will be to let them work themselves out. In any case it is not for elders to censure or condemn or criticise, but to seek to understand as fully as possible and not to interfere unduly. If any treatment is really needed it must be based on that understanding. It may indeed sometimes happen that a boy who is still at school is attracted by a girl in a sensible and serious way. If he can make that the inspiration to achieve a career which he may one day share with her, it is just possible that this may help rather than hinder. But it implies that the girl on her part realises that she can assist enormously by standing by, or standing back, encouraging, but not expecting too much at present. In fact, the situation calls for restraint, good sense, and careful handling on the part of all concerned.

The situation has however been complicated within recent years by a marked change in society's attitude towards sex problems. The quite irresponsible exploitation of sex by the popular press and entertainment, and by advertising, especially since the last war, has added considerably to the difficulties of the parent – and of the teacher – in respect of these matters. The modern cult of the young woman (often in various stages of undress) may unduly emphasise eroticism and be unhelpful to adolescent boys. However, the school's job is not simply to acquiesce and take its standards from agencies which utilise sex for commercial profit. For us teachers the corollary would seem to be that we should

try to be wise and sympathetic – not too high-brow or pragmatical or prudish on the one hand, nor too indulgent or sentimental or slack on the other. We should realise that the boys and girls committed to our charge are prompted by instincts implanted by nature, and stronger almost than any others we possess. But it is for us to guide these instincts aright, pointing always to something a little higher and nobler. The time will come when our responsibilities will cease, and we shall hand on our children to a fuller and wider life than that which they have known under our care. If we can so wisely deal with our boys and girls that they will go forward to a sane and happy married life, we shall fulfil one of our highest duties as teachers.

For further reading

- K. C. Garrison, *Psychology of Adolescence*.
- C. M. Fleming, *Adolescence; its Social Psychology*.
- J. Hemming, *Problems of Adolescent Girls*.
- B. A. Howard, *The Mixed School*.
- L. B. Pekin, *Co-education*.

THE SCHOOL

CHAPTER 5

The school and the home

In the popular mind education is usually associated with the school. The whole paraphernalia of public education, with its elaborate systems of administration and its pre-occupation with buildings and institutions leads the man in the street to think that education is confined to what goes on in these places. But all kinds of experience are educative – not merely the formal, deliberate and systematic work of the school or college, but also the chance influences of social intercourse of all kinds. The school is one among many educative instruments. Sir John Adams distinguishes ‘human’ and ‘cosmic’ education. The former denotes ‘all kinds of education in which man has deliberately taken himself in hand. In cosmic education man’s place as educator is taken by some force that is more or less external to him’.¹ Elsewhere Adams suggests ‘by-education’ as a simpler and more appropriate term than ‘cosmic education’.² It is, however, obvious that there must, and should, be considerable interaction between school education and by-education. The child’s life in school and the wider influences at work outside are not shut off entirely one from the other; and it is the duty

¹ J. Adams, *Evolution of Educational Theory*, p. 31.

² J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, p. 25.

of the school to take into account these influences and to make use of them.

The most important source of the child's 'by-education' is normally the family or the home. This must have been the case in all primitive communities; and in early Roman and Jewish society the family took the whole responsibility for the child's education and dispensed altogether with the school.¹ In this case 'human' and 'by-education' were fused. But even under modern conditions the first five years are spent mainly, if not wholly, in the home. The relations between members of the same family are immediate, direct and living. If the home is a good one, therefore, it is here that the child first learns the spirit of co-operation and acquires the virtues which lie at the root of social organisation – sympathy, affection, gratitude, respect, obedience, unselfishness. Impressions and habits formed in these early years are particularly powerful and lasting. The Jesuits – although in practice they neglected primary education – are credited with the statement that, if they could have charge of the child during the first six years of his life, they did not mind who had him afterwards. Comenius called the first six years 'The School of the Mother's Knee' – i.e. the school of the home; and he found in it the elements of all later education, intellectual, moral and religious. Even Rousseau considers that the real nurse is the mother and the real preceptor the father; and therefore, in order to justify the employment of a tutor for *Émile* and to fulfil the duty which naturally belongs to the father, he has to make *Émile* an orphan.² Pestalozzi started his career as an educationist by taking a number of neglected children into his own home

¹ W. Boyd, *The History of Western Education* (rev. edn), pp. 58 and 62–3.

² See *Émile* (trans. Payne), p. 21; but on p. 82 Rousseau, forgetting this fact, makes *Émile* write a letter to his parents. See also p. 15.

and treating them as members of his family; and he maintained this attitude throughout his life. In *Leonard and Gertrude*, again, the true teacher is the mother, and not someone from outside the home. Froebel carried on Pestalozzi's theory; and to him it is only in the family that the child can become a symmetrical, real, whole man; only in the family is there complete provision for the fundamental need of children – self-expression.

The statutory age for school-entry in Britain is five; but owing largely to the activities of Rachel and Margaret McMillan, a movement began in the early years of the present century for the provision of 'nursery schools' for infants from about the age of two to five. These 'schools', of course, give no formal instruction, but the children have full opportunity for play and rest, and for the development of good personal and social habits. The Fisher Act of 1918 made it permissive for local education authorities to set up such schools; but they are definitely required by the 1944 Act to provide nursery schools, or nursery classes attached to infant schools, where these are needed. Although the movement has not escaped the criticism that such schools tend to relieve the home of its proper responsibility, it is now felt in some quarters that nursery school education should be available for children of all types and classes. At any rate the criticism has far more force when applied to the 'day nursery'. This is a *crèche* where babies can be left in the care of nurses or nursery assistants while their mothers work in a neighbouring factory. The writer recently saw, in a day nursery attached to a jute-mill, several infants less than six weeks old. They had been deposited there so that their mothers could be set free to attend to machines – instead of their children. Such a practice may doubtless be dictated by economic conditions; and the State even urges it sometimes

as a patriotic duty. That it should be necessary at all is an illustration of the social ills of the present age.

The most ardent advocate of the nursery school would not deny the enormous importance of the home in the early education of the child. But even when he goes to the infant school at the age of five, the family still controls a large part of his by-education. The school's influence is inevitably limited by the fact that it operates for only about five hours a day and for five days a week during (say) forty weeks of the year – *i.e.* about one-eighth or one-ninth of the child's life while he is of school age. This is too short and too comminuted a period in which to establish good habits of speech and behaviour through the medium of the school alone, if the home acts as a counteracting factor. Moreover there is a lack of continuity about the school's influence owing to the breaks for holidays, and the regrouping of pupils in a new form and with a new class-teacher each year. During the time that the child is in school its effect on him is, or may be, very marked; but the best we can say is that its function is to supplement, and not to supplant, the home. The duty of the latter will normally be to consider the child's physical well-being, to provide food, clothing, amusements and leisure occupations – though the tendency of modern life has been for the community increasingly to invade this sphere. It might also be claimed that the home should concern itself with the 'details' of religious training – though in practice this duty is very largely neglected. What is meant is not that the school should have no concern for religion; far from that. But the school normally contains pupils drawn from families of many different creeds and of no creeds at all. That being so, it might seem advisable that *denominational* religious teaching should be left to the home or some non-school agency – *e.g.* a church – rather than that a school

should be confined solely or mainly to members of a particular sect. This contention does not absolve the parent from his responsibility; but if he decides that his children are to have no religious training at home, or are to be withdrawn from religious instruction at school, it should obviously be because he deliberately and honestly thinks that this is the right course, and not because he is slack or indifferent.

If these are the main duties of the home in the education of the child, the school's function is to provide his intellectual training and – in Adams' words – 'to manipulate the experience of the educands in such a way as to lead to their taking their proper place in the society in which they have to live'.¹ The school exists not merely to purvey knowledge; it is not just a 'teaching-shop'. It will endeavour by every means in its power to stimulate the sense both of personal service and also of corporate responsibility and public spirit. These things can hardly be accomplished without some kind of co-operation and goodwill on the part of the home, but they can never be taught fully and adequately within its inevitably narrow limits. They blossom best out of the membership of a big corporate body. The *esprit de corps* learnt by membership of the greater family – the brotherhood or sisterhood of the school – may, it is to be hoped, be carried on in after-life in service to the community, the nation, and the brotherhood of nations. These are the civic virtues which can be inculcated more effectually through the school than by other agencies; and it is here particularly that the school amplifies and completes the training which the family should give.

As has been pointed out, the influence of the family in the education of the child has been weakened by modern social

¹ J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, p. 29.

and economic changes. The power of the school and all the agencies with which it is associated has undoubtedly grown, and that at a time when the size of families has been shrinking and the proportion of 'only children' growing.¹ But the tendency is not entirely modern. The Church first took away the family's monopoly of the child's education; and as it has lost its hold, its place has been assumed increasingly by the State. Free and compulsory schooling, medical inspection, feeding of school children, nursery schools – all these are measures of State intervention which are undoubtedly of benefit not only to the State itself, but also to the individual child, and thus to the family to which the child belongs. It may be objected that such measures free the family from responsibilities which it should naturally shoulder; and indeed it is possible that in an ideal society these services would not be necessary or even desirable. But it remains almost certainly true that, although an extension of State intervention, along the lines indicated, may afford some parents an opportunity of shirking their natural duties, yet it is very unlikely that a limitation of such intervention would result, under present conditions, in a strengthening of the educational influence of the family. It would seem that the problem will be most readily solved by an improvement in the general conditions in the home, and by supplementing deficiencies which, as things are, too often exist. Thus the amelioration of housing conditions and the organisation of community life on the new housing estates, the overcoming of unemployment and inadequate wages,

¹ Of couples married about 1860 some 5% became parents of an only child. This percentage had increased to 25% in marriages of 1925, as recorded in the 1946 Family Census. The percentage would be larger in the families of non-manual workers. (See *Report of the Royal Commission on Population, 1949*, Table xvii and p. 219).

easier conditions of life for the family group and especially for the mother, restriction of the employment of children, instruction for parents and parents-to-be in the duties and responsibilities of their job – these are some of the things which may help the home to realise and to put into practice its function in the education of the child.

For further reading

P. E. Cusden, *The English Nursery School*.

L. de Lissa, *Life in the Nursery School*.

Ministries of Education and Health, *Not Yet Five*.

Ministry of Education, Central Advisory Committee (England),
School and Life, Chapter II.

Publications of the Nursery School Association of Great Britain,
1, Park Crescent, London, W.1.

CHAPTER 6

The boarding school. Teacher and parent

The sharing of the responsibility for the child's education between the family and the school raises the question of the boarding school. This is an institution unknown in the ancient world, except perhaps at Sparta; and it comes into existence with the monastic school. In an institution of this kind, designed primarily for *internes*, the Church could take complete charge of the pupils, and thus endeavour to modify their minds and their characters according to a definite plan. This would have been difficult, or even impossible, if an outside agency, such as the home, were allowed to interfere periodically. However diluted under modern conditions, there is still a tendency to claim that the boarding school has a greater opportunity to 'mould character' than the day school which is so much more dependent on the attitude of the home. For better or worse that is doubtless true.

England, ever since the Middle Ages, has been well provided with grammar schools which were designed mainly for day pupils, and were often free to town boys and therefore open to the poorer classes. The landed gentry, living in the country, usually provided a governess for their daughters. Their sons were probably taught by the local curate or some other tutor; and when they were old enough they might be sent away to a boarding school. Some important schools of this type had evolved from what were founded as town

grammar schools – *e.g.* Rugby, Harrow and Shrewsbury; but the increase in the value of endowments, the efforts of eminent headmasters, and the development of buildings and ‘plant’, gave them a national standing, and they drew their pupils from all parts of the country, and therefore became mainly or exclusively boarding schools. This is the genesis of many of our ‘public schools’. Their rise, as has been said, has been due partly at any rate to social conditions – the difficulty for wealthy people living in country districts to get a suitable higher education for their sons; but because the public boarding schools were expensive to run and had to charge high fees, they were accessible only to the so-called ‘upper classes’. Thus the public boarding school became associated with social or economic considerations which may have tended to cloud its educational significance. The growth of easy communications, coupled with increasing prosperity and the rise of a wealthy manufacturing and trading class during the nineteenth century, led to the foundations of new boarding schools on the old public school lines – *e.g.* Cheltenham, Marlborough, Bradfield, Lancing. Thus those who could afford it had ample opportunity for ensuring that their sons were admitted to the charmed circle, with the social advantages and opportunities of advancement which that implied.

Boarding schools – and here, for reasons already given, one thinks particularly of the public schools – are, like all other schools, individual organisms and each has its own personality. There are good boarding schools and bad ones – and this is equally true of day schools. But it is still possible to discuss in general terms the merits of the boarding school, and more particularly to deal with the problem of the public school which has attracted considerable public attention.¹

¹ See, for example, the Fleming Report (1944).

It may be contended that though some homes can be trusted to co-operate sensibly with a day school, many parents are incapable of bringing up their offspring wisely. Children are too often spoilt or indulged, or frightened, or encouraged to think too much of their difficulties or ailments. If a boarding school can be substituted for such a home the child may more easily find his own level and be neither neglected nor pampered nor bullied. Unfortunately, parents who are most apt to treat their children unwisely are usually the least likely to send them to a boarding school. But in some cases a boarding school is a sheer necessity. There may be literally no home and no family in which the child could be brought up. The parents may be dead or serving in some country overseas where the climate is unsuited to an English child, or where there is a lack of suitable day schools.

It is often claimed that the corporate life of the boarding school is particularly well suited to develop the virtues of self-reliance, responsibility and leadership. The house-system is said to encourage these traits, and at the same time to afford some approach to the conditions of family life. In a boarding school pupils act and react on each other to a greater extent and more effectively than in a day school. The formation of character at any stage is largely the result of companionship; but with boys at school – for better or worse – character is formed more by observation and imitation of other boys than by the precepts of teachers; and for that reason in the case of the boarding school the question of ‘tone’ is of particular importance. This close action and reaction among the pupils in a boarding school makes for ease in dealing with other people, and helps good speech and social manners – things which are often the chief characteristics of the public school product. Again, the champions of the public school not infrequently point out that ‘first and

foremost (they) stand for the Christian faith as the basis and inspiration of all their work'.¹ We have the highest authority for judging an institution by its fruits; and, without in any way minimising the importance of this side of public school life, it is perhaps pertinent to inquire whether in fact ex-public school pupils do in their personal conduct show the influence of Christian ideals more generally and to a more marked degree than those who have been educated in any other type of school.

The opponents of the public boarding school have from time to time deplored its immoral practices and bullying and similar flagrant behaviour. If one were writing a history of boarding schools in England it would not be difficult to find abundant evidence of this kind. But under present-day conditions it can be said with confidence that such a lurid picture is not true, and that the boarding schools are probably as free from these grosser practices as the day schools. Proof in either case is impossible; but at any rate the modern critic would not assume the role of Sydney Smith who described public school education as a 'system of premature debauchery'.² A more pertinent criticism may be that too many boarding schools tend to be entirely self-contained, not only lacking contacts with the community in which they are placed, but even without interest in it. Pupils are thus deprived of the give-and-take experiences of ordinary life. Everything is, in a way, artificialised for them, and this may encourage a sense of superiority over 'town cads', which is unwarrantable and undesirable. The possible disadvantages of a one-sex boarding school have already been mentioned.³

¹ Headmasters' Conference Report on *Public Schools and the Future* (1943). See also Spencer Leeson, *The Public Schools Question*, p. 4, and J. F. Wolfenden, *The Public Schools Today*, pp. 35-6.

² *Essays* (1810), 'Public Schools'.

³ See *supra*, pp. 43-44.

The argument which in recent years has been levelled most often at the boarding school in general, and at the public school in particular, is that it encourages and increases class-consciousness, which has been and still is the curse of English education. According to the Fleming Report, the public schools did not create the social distinctions of the nineteenth century, but were the outcome of them. 'But it may certainly be granted that once the division in the educational system had been completed, it made far more difficult the task of those who looked towards a breaking-down of these hard-drawn class distinctions within the society of the nation.'¹ The boarding school is bound to be expensive because it supplies board and lodging as well as instruction, and as a rule it does not receive state aid. This tends to keep it a class school; and this may be stimulated by tradition, when it is the custom for members of a family to be sent to a particular school, and by that close *camaraderie* among old boys which is summed up in the phrase 'the old school tie'. Sir Cyril Norwood says: 'I think it is in *Sinister Street* that the hero relates that when, as a freshman at Magdalen, he was in the company of undergraduates fresh from the public schools, and being asked where he came from, gave the name of a day school, there was an immediate hush as if he had said he was illegitimate.'² It is possible that the public school does encourage class-consciousness; but the further criticism – which one sometimes hears – that it provides an atmosphere which over-values athleticism and is unfavourable to intellectual pursuits, may just possibly be true of individual schools, but cannot be generally true. The record of such schools in the open scholarship examinations at Oxford and Cambridge would of itself be sufficient to

¹ Fleming Report (1944), p. 23.

² C. Norwood, *The English Tradition in Education*, p. 132.

disprove the allegation. For various reasons the sixth form of the average public boarding school is of higher quality than that of the average day grammar school (though there are conspicuous exceptions); but it may remain true that many of the smaller and less distinguished public schools contain a larger percentage of average or under-average pupils.

Finally it may be argued that the full co-operation between home and school, which it should be the aim of the day school to foster for the pupil's benefit, is not possible for the boarding school. It was a boarding school headmaster who is reported to have said: 'Boys are always reasonable; masters sometimes; parents never.' This may be another example of the boarding school's tendency to keep aloof and be self-sufficient; though there are times when the day school headmaster may be tempted to agree with Frederick Temple of Rugby. But the pupil in the boarding school may miss something through lack of everyday contact with the ordinary life of a family. It may be argued that he is at home for three months or more of every year, so that he can get the benefit of home-life during that period. But he is never at home under normal conditions; he is there on holiday, expecting too often to be amused or to relax, and not to take an integral and continuous part in the family routine, as the day school pupil should be encouraged to do.

To sum up, the relative claims of the public boarding school and the day school can hardly be decided on *a priori* grounds; and ultimately the question will turn on individual needs or opportunities. In their Report the Committee on Public Schools, under the chairmanship of Lord Fleming, made detailed recommendations whereby the opportunities of public school education should 'be made available to boys and girls capable of profiting thereby, irrespective of

the income of their parents'.¹ It may remain true that advocates of the public schools tend too often to regard as axiomatic their superiority as educational institutions; whereas there are many parents who, even if they could afford to send their children to an expensive boarding school, would unhesitatingly prefer a good day grammar school or some other form of day school. At the same time there is much to be said in favour of giving some children, at least, a spell of boarding school education – say for a year of their school life. The experience gained during the evacuation of schools under war conditions, and with 'camp schools' and similar institutions, has proved that many boys and girls benefit from a limited period under boarding school conditions, even if the bulk of their education is obtained in a day school.

We return, however, to a consideration of the day school, because it seems less likely to emphasise class sectionalism, it is more closely in touch with ordinary and everyday life, and it makes possible a more close co-operation between the family and the school. There are various ways in which this co-operation may be encouraged. It is often helpful to establish a Parents' or Parent-Teacher Association. The urge to do so should come preferably from the side of the parents rather than from the authorities of the school. Meetings of such a society afford an opportunity for parents to understand the school's point of view and to ask questions; and for the school to explain its rules and its aims, and to help educate parents in a sense of their responsibilities. Sometimes a distinguished lecturer from outside may be asked to speak; and social events organised by the association give parents a chance of meeting each other in a friendly way on the school premises. 'Open Days' can also be arranged by the

¹ Fleming Report (1944), p. 100.

school and the presence of parents invited. It is obviously impossible to carry on teaching under such conditions; the school can never be 'at work' with hosts of visitors coming in and out. But exhibitions and displays and demonstrations are possible; a play or a concert may be presented; and the annual 'parents' match' is often an event of great social value both to the school and to the parents themselves. A parents' association can also be of great value to the staff. It enables parents to meet their children's teachers easily in an unofficial way and affords informal opportunities for the discussion of details. Teachers – and especially heads – tend sometimes to distrust parents' associations as possible sources of interference or unwarranted criticism. But with a little tact and goodwill on both sides such difficulties need not normally arise; and on the contrary a strong and enthusiastic parents' association may often prove a great asset to a school.

If a teacher is in charge of a group of pupils – a class or a house, for instance – it is important for him to get to know as much as possible about each of them from the home point of view – *e.g.* the type of home; any special difficulties which exist there, such as unemployment, lack of suitable accommodation for homework, bad relations between the mother and father, over-indulgence or repression of the pupil by his parents; is the child properly nourished and looked after; is he an only child; if not, how many siblings are there; what are the child's special interests and hobbies; how many evenings a week are taken up by visits to the cinema or looking at television; what time does he go to bed; what other contacts (*e.g.* with churches and societies) has he? As information on subjects such as these is collected, it should be entered in a private memorandum book – which must of course always be kept *locked up*. But if some school problem arises – disciplinary or connected with classwork – it should

be carefully considered in relation to any details which have been ascertained about the child's home conditions. This may help towards a more sane solution than if the difficulty is regarded as one which relates to the school alone.

So far as possible the teacher should not rely simply on second-hand information about the home. It is helpful for him to obtain direct contacts, when these are possible, with the homes of the pupils for whom he is particularly responsible. School open days and meetings of the parents' association may give opportunities; but one need not always be afraid of visiting a home. A child's illness or some school difficulty may provide an excuse; and in the writer's experience a warm welcome from the home will await the teacher who shows this evidence of interest in a child's well-being. If a member of staff feels diffident as to the wisdom or propriety of such a visit, it is always possible to obtain the advice of the head. It is often helpful to get into touch with other adults who may be interested in one's pupils – *e.g.* parsons, scoutmasters, and the like.

For further reading

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CHAPTER 7

The school as a society

The school, as has been said, is not concerned simply with intellectual education. It is a society – but a society of a special kind. In a sense it is a ‘microcosm’, a real world in itself on a minute scale, and there should be no violent break between conditions of life inside the school and the life outside. There should be no conventionalised, school-specialised standards of conduct which do not ‘carry over’ into the outside world – though, in practice, there often are. The fewer the school rules, as *school* rules, the better. At a well-known English public school the whole matter was summed up in the phrase: ‘A breach of common sense is a breach of a school rule.’¹ But in spite of this continuity between the good school and the world outside, the school must always be in a sense an artificialised society. ‘While it should reflect the outer world truly, it should reflect only what is best and most vital there.’² If schools are microcosms, they are idealised microcosms; or, to use Sanderson’s simpler phrase, they ‘should be miniature copies of the world we should love to have’.³ It is worth while therefore to consider what should be our guiding principles in trying to reproduce

¹ See also Dorothea Beale’s views on this point in F. C. Steadman, *In the Days of Miss Beale*, p. 110–11.

² T. P. Nunn, *Education: its Data and First Principles* (3rd. revd. ed.),

p. 253.

³ H. G. Wells, *The Story of a Great Schoolmaster*, p. 108.

in the life of the school this idealised epitome of the world itself.

Perhaps we can best express our English conception of the purpose of the life and society of the school by saying that it should teach its pupils to be free, and to use their freedom rightly. This gives us a new interpretation of the term 'liberal education'. It originated with the Greek philosopher Aristotle, and denoted the education which was undertaken for its own sake and was possible only for the 'free' citizen.¹ It was contrasted with the mechanical or professional education which was pursued for practical ends and was open to a separate slave or merchant class. At the Renaissance the term came to be associated with a study of the revived and re-interpreted classical humanities; and this identification of the liberal education with a study of the Classics – often in a narrow and formal way – fastened itself on our universities and grammar schools which in the seventeenth and eighteenth, and even nineteenth, centuries were more restricted to the leisured classes of the community than they had been in the Middle Ages. The very term 'grammar school' meant a school in which *Latin* grammar is taught. It was commonly accepted that a 'liberal education' of this type was the perquisite of those classes which had the responsible, but exclusive, task of governing the country. These social conditions no longer obtain, and therefore the whole conception of the liberal education needs restatement, along the lines suggested at the beginning of this paragraph.

When the child is born into this world, it may be claimed that certain latent capabilities are, as it were, imprisoned in him. They are there as potentialities, and the task of education, in its widest sense, is to realise them and develop them and – as we might say – make the child *free* of them. There

¹ The Latin word *liber* means 'free'.

is a poem entitled *Prayers*, by H. C. Beeching, which begins: 'God who created me Nimble and light of limb, In three elements free – To run, to ride, to swim.'¹ The boy who speaks was created nimble and light of limb; but he had to learn to run and ride and swim, and so become *free* in the three elements of earth and air and water. If therefore education helps the pupil to follow a train of reasoning, or solve a problem, or understand and speak a foreign language, or analyse a chemical substance, or play a game, or make a speech, or perform on a musical instrument, or organise a society, or take a part in a play, or make a pudding or a rabbit-hutch, he is the more free to express himself. Thus we are no longer thinking in terms of hard-and-fast school subjects, but of activities – and that is in line with modern educational opinion, though there is much danger of over-emphasising, or rather misinterpreting, the significance of this term. It does not in the least imply that effort and hard work are no longer required, and that we are committed to a programme of 'soft options'; but it does give a new meaning to the conception of the liberal education – the education of free men. It is no longer designed for a special social class, but it is open to everyone; there is 'equality of opportunity', though of course individual capacity to benefit by it may vary enormously.

The liberal education, which the school should give, may help to make the 'free' man; but what will he do with his freedom? That indeed is immensely important; and if education is concerned simply or mainly with 'self-expression' our last state may well be worse than the first. In fact, most of our troubles are due to unchecked and irresponsible self-expression. And so, together with the 'freeing' of the individual must go also guidance as to the right use of

¹ See *Songs of Praise*, 241.

freedom. St. Peter says that we should be 'As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness'¹ – *i.e.* as an excuse for harming someone else. The right education must not only set free, but must also show the reasonableness of using one's individual freedom for the common good. The process must not be merely didactic; the whole life and atmosphere of the school should conduce to that end. Perhaps it is along these lines that we may seek to solve the the age-long problem of reconciling the claims of the individual and of society in the education of the child. At any rate, these two functions constitute the fundamental duty of the school, and the cultural value of the education which it gives should be assessed according to how far that duty is carried out.

The attainment of these ends, then, is a matter of the school spirit and demands something more than organisation and machinery. Yet even at this level there are some recommendations which may be made here; though some at least will be amplified later. For example, teaching should not be too stereotyped; there should be room for the individual pupil to develop on his own lines and in his own way; schemes such as the Dalton Plan² (which encourages individual expression) and the Project Method³ (which fosters co-operation) can be tried out, if only in a modified form. It may not be wise to rely too much on competition, but to let the pupil's performance be compared, as far as possible, with his previous achievements, and not with those of other pupils.⁴ House-systems may help, because they tend to turn individual activities into team activities; and pupils can

¹ I Peter ii. 16.

² See *infra* pp. 114–117.

³ See *infra* pp. 117–119.

⁴ See *infra* pp. 138–139.

work for their side as well as play for it. A prefect system imposed solely from above, and without the willing recognition on the part of the other pupils of its authority and its value, is liable to be ineffective. It matters little in practice how exactly prefects are appointed so long as there is sympathy between prefects and those whom they govern.¹ The chief ground for the delegation of authority to prefects is that they, being still immature, are nearer the mind of the rest of the school than the authorities are; and that the holding of responsibility may be a valuable means of character training. There remains the danger that too heavy responsibilities may be laid on young shoulders.

Another help towards the realisation of the responsibilities implied in freedom may be the schemes of self-government in which pupils are encouraged to take over some at any rate of the responsibility for good order and discipline.² School societies, again, run by pupils encourage individual hobbies and interests, but greatly enhance their value, because in such an environment they become 'socialised'. This is true also of team games, which must therefore be regarded as an integral part of the life of the school as a society. Should they for this reason be made a compulsory element in that life? That is another question, and the answer in practice may be determined by quite irrelevant factors – *e.g.* on how far the playing-field is from the school or the homes of the pupils, or how large a proportion of them have to travel to and from school. But if we apply our 'freedom' test, the answer will turn on how far compulsory games do in fact make pupils 'free', and teach them to use their freedom for the common good. They may possibly have the reverse effect. The boy

¹ Refer to S. J. Curtis, *History of Education in Great Britain*, pp. 146–7, on Thomas Arnold and his prefect system.

² See *infra* Chapter 19.

who is *made* to play cricket, but hates it, may tend to associate all co-operative school activities with unpleasant compulsion. On the whole it is probably true that children who benefit from team games would play them whether they were compulsory or not; and that those who are compelled against their will to play them are unlikely to benefit. A better solution is to provide some alternative forms of socialised physical activity for the non-game-playing pupils – e.g. scouting or guiding, cycling, hiking, camping, field-studies, school journeys, folk-dancing, and so on.

Finally something should be said of the school assembly which, if rightly utilised, may be a powerful influence in fostering the right kind of school spirit. The division of the school into classes or ‘houses’ is obviously necessary for its organisation; but it is equally important that all pupils alike should realise the essential oneness of the whole school as a community, in spite of the variety of its life. An opportunity for this is afforded by the daily assembly of the whole school. Even the announcements may be a matter of common, and not of sectional, interest; and when a talk or piece of advice or instruction is given, it is given to the whole school.¹ But the chief significance of the daily assembly is its association with an act of daily worship. There is always the danger of formalism, especially if too rigid a routine is adopted – *corruptio optimi pessima*. At the same time, in spite of the decline in church-going, it still seems the desire of the average British parent that his child should attend corporate worship and receive religious instruction at school. During the whole time that the writer was a headmaster he never once had an application for the withdrawal of a boy on conscientious grounds; though, of course, parents had every legal right to claim this, and special arrangements were

¹ Refer to J. J. Findlay, *The Foundations of Education*, pp. 77 ff.

made for Roman Catholics and Jews. It is probable, in any case, that most people in this country would prefer a daily act of worship in school to requiring pupils, throughout their school-life, to take a daily oath of allegiance to the State, without apparently even the option, secured by law, of withdrawal on conscientious grounds, as is the practice in the U.S.A.

As regards the school service there should be much variation in the prayers and hymns which are used. A school prayers committee, on which both pupils and staff are represented, may well be given an oversight of the procedure. Lessons may sometimes be read, or the whole service conducted, by a member of the staff or of the upper school. If these things are carried out wisely and reverently they may do something to enable the pupils to realise the highest and best powers that are in them, and to use them willingly in the highest and best ways. Children may be helped to understand that Christianity is not simply something which is learnt from a book, or a set of words, or from the teacher in a scripture lesson; but that it is an eminently practical business to be applied in the ordinary relationships of everyday life, both in the school and outside.

For further reading

- T. P. Nunn, *Education: Data and First Principles* (especially chap. XVI).
 Cyril Norwood, *The English Tradition in Education* (Part I).
 Fred Clarke, *Freedom in the Educative Society*.
 N. Catty, *Social Training*.
 W. R. Niblett (ed.), *Moral Education in a Changing Society*.
 R. L. Arundale, *School Worship Day by Day*.
 D. S. Smith, *The School Service*.

THE PRACTICE OF TEACHING

CHAPTER 8

Syllabuses. Teaching techniques

The drawing up of a syllabus for each school-subject delimits the ground which each pupil will cover during his school career, according to the course which he follows. The task of producing such a syllabus devolves on the responsible teacher of the subject to which it relates. The plan will comprise the whole school course; but it will be subdivided into yearly assignments, each taken, as the pupil moves up the school, in a succession of forms or classes. The young teacher will thus have responsibility for a year's work in his subject or subjects with a selection of forms; and under the direction of a senior master or mistress he will know exactly what he is required to do. It will therefore be advisable to arrange the year's work in terminal allotments; and also to decide – roughly, at any rate – the ground to be covered in each week, or even in each individual lesson. Room must be allowed for periodic revisions. Unless some systematic plan of this kind is followed there is serious danger of failure to cover the prescribed ground during the school year, or to be reduced to rushing the latter part of it. At the same time, it is quite possible that some parts of the syllabus may need less stress and attention than others. A young teacher should be in constant touch with the responsible specialist in regard to such matters.

It is for the sake of convenience in teaching and organisation that the curriculum has been divided up into separate 'subjects'; but ultimately such differentiation is largely artificial. All knowledge is *one*; and it might be quite possible to classify it under different subject headings from those to which we are accustomed. An example is the attempt to substitute 'local studies' for separate courses in history and geography. There is certainly a contrast between the fluidity of the child's experience and the hard and fast 'subjects' of the classroom curriculum. During a 'nature-study walk', for instance, the child may at one moment be learning botany, at another geology, at another natural history, at another local history and geography – and so on. In actual teaching something may be done to break down the barrier between subjects by the use of correlation – *i.e.* by trying to make the various school subjects relate to one another as far as possible. To do this systematically and on a large scale tends to be a rather artificial process; but it is worth while for the responsible specialist teachers to draw up their syllabuses in consultation and under the direction of the headmaster or headmistress. This will help to prevent overlapping and to save time. For example, the syllabuses in geography and science might be so arranged that a study of climate coincided with physics lessons on the thermometer and barometer. The history of the period of the Great Discoveries might be fitted to the broad geography of the continents concerned. The Romantic Movement might be studied not only in English literature, but also in that of France and Germany, and in music and art. But, apart from this more formal type of correlation, the class teacher should take the opportunity to make incidental cross-references whenever he can. Language forms in English, Latin and French often have a relation; a quotation from one literature

may perhaps be paralleled in another; algebraical and geometrical procedures are often closely related; the history of a scientific process may perhaps illustrate the process itself.

The techniques concerned with the actual practice of teaching are usually summed up in the term 'method'. It is customary to distinguish 'particular' method from 'general' method – *i.e.* the principles of teaching separate school subjects as distinct from those which underlie all teaching, whatever the particular subject. It is obvious that particular methods, as such, do exist; and there are many treatises available which deal with them.¹ Mathematics, for example, cannot be taught on exactly the same lines as history; the teaching of French must differ significantly from that of chemistry or music or physical education. If that is so, are there any principles of general method which can be laid down?

In the older type of training college for teachers in 'elementary' schools there was always a member of staff whose title was Master of Method. Other lecturers dealt with academic subjects, like English or mathematics; but his duty was to explain how these subjects were to be taught in school. His province therefore included both general and special method; whereas, under modern conditions, the teaching of specific subjects is usually dealt with by specialist lecturers or supervisors. The master of method used to inculcate various principles which were believed to apply to all types of teaching – *e.g.* that it should proceed from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the complex, from the concrete to the abstract. It is just possible that the worrying-out of a Latin unseen translation or of a problem in mathematics does not readily comply with these rather

¹ Refer to the Appendix, pp. 254–8.

facile recommendations. But the old-fashioned idea of general method owed a great deal to the German philosopher and educationist Herbart (1776-1841), and his five formal 'steps', which provided a framework into which almost any kind of lesson could be crammed. According to him, the 'soul' or mind has no activity of its own, but he gives an activity to the ideas, which present themselves to the soul and which constitute the individual mind. This is not made up of 'faculties', but the ideas tend to associate themselves in what Herbart called 'apperception masses'. The more associations an idea can form, the stronger its position in the mind.¹ Thus the purpose of the teacher in introducing new ideas to the child's mind is first to prepare it by calling up previously acquired ideas which will join with those which are to be presented during the lesson, and so to form strong associations or apperception masses. The process will generate interest – intellectual activity and impulse to further effort; and as the process of apperception links up in many directions the interest itself becomes 'many-sided'.

Herbart's doctrines provided a psychological or philosophical basis for general method. He divided the material of instruction into 'method units'. These were not necessarily coterminous with individual lessons, but each had its own explicit aim and a definite content related to the child's existing stock of ideas. The technique of teaching in each of these units was divided into the formal five steps,² to which reference has already been made. First comes Preparation or Analysis – the calling to mind of existing ideas which have intimate connection with the new ideas to be presented, and

¹ For a detailed (and amusing) account of Herbart's theories see J. Adams, *The Herbartian Psychology applied to Education*, and especially chapter III.

² See Felkin, *Introduction to Herbart's Education*, pp. 107 ff.

arranging them so as to facilitate linking-up. The second step is Presentation or Synthesis, and here the new material of the lesson is given. This is followed by Association, where the apperceptive process begins and the new idea is linked up with other ideas already in the mind. Herbart says that this process is most easily achieved in the course of free conversation during which pupils tell what occurs to them in connection with the matter under discussion. Fourthly comes Generalisation or System. Here reflection begins and a new general notion is established out of the particulars; facts are seen in their proper relations and are arranged systematically as an organic whole. The final step is Application or Method. The system is now put to the test; for example, once an arithmetical or grammatical rule has been established by generalisation, the pupil should apply his knowledge of it by working specific new examples.¹

Herbartianism has had enormous influence on the theory and practice of teaching, though with the development of modern educational psychology its validity has been considerably undermined. It remains true that for the didactic type of lesson – *i.e.* that which aims primarily at imparting knowledge – the Herbartian method is full of suggestion and may be applied, though perhaps in a more or less modified form. But there are many other kinds of lesson or method unit. There is, for example, the heuristic lesson, which was advocated strongly by Professor H. E. Armstrong in the 1890s, as a protest against the contemporary excessive reliance on sheer memorisation of facts.² Armstrong would place the pupil as far as possible in the position of a dis-

¹ Examples of lessons constructed on the lines of Herbart's 'Five Steps' are described in F. Smith and A. S. Harrison, *Principles of Class Teaching*, pp. 313 ff.

² See S. J. Curtis, *History of Education in Great Britain* (revised edition 1950), pp. 295–6.

coverer; he is to search for his own data and ask his own questions; then, using the scientific method of induction he is to test his hypotheses and formulate his conclusions. A good deal of teaching in chemistry and physics can be carried out along these lines, but the principle of heurism is not confined to scientific subjects. For example, the pupil may be asked to say what light is thrown on the character of Henry V by an extract or extracts from an original document.¹ Another type of lesson analyses facts which are already known. This is done, for instance, in working a rider in geometry or in such a geographical exercise as: 'Discuss what would be the climate of South America if the Andes ran down the east side of the continent instead of the west side.' Again, a lesson may develop constructive skill; the result aimed at must first be analysed and then the idea expressed in actual form. The making of a book-trough in the handicraft room, or of a pudding in the domestic science centre, is an example of this kind. Yet another method unit may be simply an opportunity for aesthetic enjoyment; the class may listen to a poem read by the teacher or to a piece of music played on the gramophone or the radio – and that without explanation or comment. The fact that there are many varieties of lesson, beside the Herbartian, does not mean in the least that each individual method unit must fit into a prescribed form. The lines of distinction should never be drawn firmly, and in the same lesson the skilful teacher may change at will from one type of approach to another. As Smith and Harrison point out, 'the teaching of drawing may mean at one time the acquirement of skill with pencil or brush, at another the acquisition of knowledge, and at a third the emotional appreciation and enjoyment of art'.²

¹ See M. W. Keatinge, *Studies in the Teaching of History*, pp. 36 ff.

² *Principles of Class Teaching*, p. 294.

In fact, such processes may be carried on together; they are by no means necessarily, if ever, successive stages in a method unit.

It may not be out of place to give a few pieces of general advice for the conduct of the lesson. Most young or inexperienced teachers tend to hurry unduly and try to get too much done at a time. It is important to make sure that each step in the method unit is achieved before proceeding to the next. Again, the teacher's aim should be to guide and to be available for reference when needed; but he should never give information if it is possible for his pupils to find it for themselves – even if this means no more than looking up a point in a book to which he refers them. The heuristic method, so far as it goes, has much to recommend it. The appeal which is made to the pupil should take many and varied forms, so that interest may be stimulated and apperceptive cross-references ensured. Techniques for securing this appeal will be suggested below;¹ examples are board-drawings, a joke (if not too feeble), an epigram or mnemonic, suitable apparatus, songs in language teaching, a school-visit to illustrate the history or geography lesson. It should also be remembered that the appeal tends to go home in different ways. The Cambridge scientist, Sir Francis Galton, investigated the problem of mental imagery;² and he suggested that some human beings (especially women and children) more easily form mental pictures, whereas with others the imagery is mainly verbal. Thus there tend to emerge two types – the visiles, to whom the appeal would be made more readily through what they see; and the audiles whose mental imagery depends mainly on what they hear. Subsequent research has shown that pure types of this kind

¹ See *infra* Chapter 14.

² See *Inquiries into Human Faculty*, chapter on 'Mental Imagery'.

do not exist, and that we can hardly divide our pupils into hard and fast groups of visiles and audiles, and (we should also add) motiles.¹ Yet it is helpful to the teacher to know whether in the case of an individual pupil the appeal may be most profitably made in a particular manner. Perhaps an occasional test of the form on the lines suggested in A. J. J. Ratcliff's *The Adult Class*² may give some clue to the treatment which is indicated. But in any case, when dealing with the class as a whole, the teacher should vary his methods so as to make his appeal as wide and as effective as possible.

For further reading

- J. Adams, *The Herbartian Psychology applied to Education*.
 F. Smith and A. S. Harrison, *Principles of Class Teaching*.
 A. Pinsent, *Principles of Teaching Methods*.
 J. Duncan, *The Education of the Ordinary Child*.

¹ Refer to Cyril Burt, *The Backward Child*, pp. 514-15. See also R. S. Woodworth, *Psychology*, p. 66.

² pp. 64-65.

CHAPTER 9

Lesson notes

Although every lesson must allow room for free development it must at the same time be organised and have a plan. For this reason lesson-notes are not only desirable, but essential. For the beginner they should be fairly full; but as he gains experience the teacher may gradually reduce them to a bare outline. But even the most advanced practitioner, before he gives a lesson, should always know quite clearly what he proposes to do. There must be some general framework inside which the lesson can develop spontaneously. For this reason it will be desirable to give some advice as to the planning and preparation of lesson-notes. For the benefit of the student or young teacher they will be described in detail; but it must be understood that so full a scheme is not necessarily recommended for those who are experienced.

A school practice note-book may be made to serve three main purposes; it will contain a plan of the lesson as prepared before it is given, and also observations made afterwards of the way in which it 'went over' in actual practice; it will be of great assistance to the supervisor or examiner who may have to advise or assess the teacher; and it may prove of use later in the student's professional career, when he may have to give a similar lesson again. A loose-leaf note-book is to be recommended for the purpose, so that lesson-notes may subsequently be filed according to their subject. Notes prepared before the lesson should be written on right-hand

pages only; and on the left-hand page, after the lesson has been given, observations and emendations may be recorded in the light of the experience gained. These may prove useful when the lesson is repeated, or they may be applied to other lessons. It is helpful to enter the actual time taken over each section of the lesson. The notes themselves should record at the beginning (a) the date, time and length of the lesson; (b) the subject of the lesson (*e.g.* *English* – a first lesson on Ballads; *Arithmetic* – Compound Division; *French* – uses of the Personal Pronouns); (c) the name of the class (*e.g.* Ia, Upper IV, Classical VI); (d) the average age of the class and their sex (B, G, or B and G); (e) books, apparatus and illustrations needed by (i) the teacher, (ii) the pupils. The body of the notes should show (a) the method of linking the lesson to previous lessons in the same series and of introducing new matter – *i.e.* the first two of the Herbartian ‘steps’; (b) the development of the lesson stage by stage; (c) a systematisation of the new knowledge acquired; this may involve exercises or other activities, and will usually imply a black-board summary (which may have been built up in the course of the lesson) or note-taking by the pupils; (d) a conclusion, often involving homework of some kind. In view, however, of what has been said above,¹ it may sometimes be wise to vary this general scheme in order to meet the requirements of particular subjects or lessons. It is a great mistake – and one to be avoided by beginners – to fill up one’s lesson-notes with masses of subject-matter. This should be introduced only so far as is necessary to explain the teaching technique, and its details should be indicated by references to the sources from which the subject matter of the lesson is drawn; or they may be recorded in a separate note-book. It will be well to specify the time which one

¹ See *supra*, pp. 77–78.

expects to take over each section of the lesson – and, as has already been said, this should be checked afterwards in the light of experience. The actual wording of questions – if the student has difficulty in phrasing them impromptu – and a draft of the blackboard summary, or other illustrative work, may also be included.

The student in training will have the great advantage of watching lessons given by teachers of skill and experience. To gain the maximum benefit from such opportunities it is well to keep the following points in mind: (a) Were the children thoroughly interested in the lesson? By what means did the teacher secure their active attention? Did anything tend to distract their attention, and how did the teacher seek to revive it if it lapsed? Was a mark-system, or some similar scheme, employed? (b) Was there at any time a tendency to disorder, and if so how did the teacher deal with it? (c) Were the hygienic conditions of the class-room satisfactory? What of its seating, lighting and ventilation? What was the posture and general health of the pupils? (d) Note the type of lesson and the selection of material as regards quantity and quality, the teacher's method of procedure and means of stimulating the pupils to effort, the illustrations used, the pupils' contribution to the lesson and how this was secured, the questioning and the way the questions were distributed, the use of the blackboard and apparatus. (e) Note also the class-room routine – the distribution and collection of material, the assembly and dismissal of the class.

It is highly desirable that not only the student in training, but also the practising teacher at any stage of his career, should keep a log-book in which to record briefly classwork done and homework set. The entries should be made at the end of each lesson. Specimen pages from such a log-book

LESSON NOTES

are appended (pp. 83-7). Note that an asterisk denotes a lesson for which homework has been set. The teacher should be able to know exactly not only what he intends to do in the lesson which he is about to give, but also where exactly he has already arrived. To begin by saying: 'Let me see, what did we do in the last lesson?' or: 'Was there any homework set for this lesson?' is shoddy and unbusinesslike; and it goes some way to undermine the confidence of the class in their teacher's professional competence.

SPECIMEN LOG FOR ONE WEEK (English, History and Geography)

April 6 MON.	CLASSWORK	HOMEWORK
Eng. Va.	Browning. <i>My last Duchess</i> .	(Tues.) Read <i>In a Laboratory, Soliloquy in Sp. Garden</i> , in prep.
Eng. IVb.	*Correction of essay on 'Walking.' Reading of Hazlitt's essay, <i>On Going a Journey</i> .	for essay on B's methods of revealing character.
Eng. VI.	*Milton. <i>Samson Agonistes</i> . Part played by the Chorus.	(Tues.) Reading of a Greek play with special ref. to the use of Chorus.
Eng. Ic.	Adverbial clauses.	(Tues.) Working examples from text-book, p. 51
Hist. Vc.	Social History. Condition of town worker in the Industrial Revolution.	
Eng. Ic.	<i>Kidnapped</i> . Reading of chapters selected.	

April 7 TUESDAY	CLASSWORK	HOMEWORK
Eng. Ic.	*Adverbial clauses. Correction of exercises in class. Lesson continued.	
Hist. IIIb.	Clive in India.	(Wed.) Map showing Clive's work in India.
Eng. Va.	*Essay on Browning's methods of revealing character.	
Eng. IVb.	Shakespeare. <i>Henry V.</i> Re-reading of part of Act IV.	(Wed.) Finish re-reading Act IV in prep. for discussion on qualities of Henry shown in Act IV.
Geog. Ib. Eng. VI.	Climate of S. America. *Essay on Milton's use of the Chorus in <i>Samson Agonistes</i> .	
April 8 WED.		
Eng. Ic.	First lesson on Ballads.	(Thurs.) Exercises on ballad metre.
Hist. IIIb.	*Clive in India.	
Eng. Va.	Revision test. Lesson contd.	
Eng. IVb.	Lesson on Précis making.	(Thurs.) Précis of selected passage (p. 102).
Eng. VI.	*Shakespeare.	
	Discussion of Henry's character as seen in Act IV. Assigning of parts and prep. for acting Act IV.	
Eng. VI.	Spencer's <i>Faerie Queene</i> .	(Thurs.) Reading of <i>A Letter of the Authors</i> noting difficulties to be discussed in class.
	First lesson - Social and Political Background of F.Q.	(Thurs.) Map showing vegetation of S. America.
Geog. Ib.	Revision of Climate of S. America. Vegetation of S. America.	(Frid.) Map showing physical features of Mississippi Basin.
Geog. IIIb.	*N. America. Mississippi Basin.	

April 9 THURS.	CLASSWORK	HOMEWORK
Eng. VI.	*Discussion of difficulties in <i>A Letter of the Authors</i> . Reading of 1st Canto with comment on language forms.	(Frid.) Re-reading of Canto I and prep. of Canto II.
Eng. IVb.	English Usage. Lesson on Use and Abuse of Adjectives.	(Mon.) Composition of two paragraphs showing misuse of Adjectives.
Eng. Va.	* <i>David Copperfield</i> – David's Schooldays.	
Eng. Ic.	*Speech Training. Hearing of exercises set from text-book. Experiment in choral verse speaking.	
Geog. Ib.	*Lesson with epidiascope showing travel in S. America.	
Hist. Vc.	Social History. Condition of country worker in Industrial R.	(Fri.) Reading of Chap. V. in text-book.
April 10 FRIDAY		
Scrip. IIIb.	The Story of Noah and the Ark. (v. Oxford Handbook, p. 100).	
Eng. Ic.	Correction of exercises on Ballad metre in class. 2nd lesson on Ballads.	
Eng. VI.	*Reading of <i>Faerie Queene</i> contd.	(Mon.) Collection of list of similes in Cantos 1 & 2.
Hist. Vc.	*Social Hist. Child labour in Industrial Revolution.	
Geog. IIIb.	*Mississippi Basin, 2nd lesson.	(Wed.) Filling in of new material in earlier map and chap. XXIII in text-book.

SPECIMEN LOG FOR ONE WEEK

(Mathematics and Science)

Sept. 22 MONDAY	CLASSWORK	HOMEWORK
Maths. Set 6.	*Geometry. Theorem 18. Meaning of congruent Triangles. Ex. 21, 6-11. Algebra Revision of rules for signs and brackets.	(Wed.) Learn Theorem 18 and Converse.
Chemistry LVa	*Theory. Revision of air, analysis of phosphorus and iron.	(Wed.) Describe and figure experiments demonstrated.
Gen. Sci. UIVc.	*Heat. Introduction to Conduction, Convection and Radiation.	
Arithmetic LIVa	Proportion.	(Thurs.) L & H. p. 80, 28-29.
Sept. 23 TUESDAY		
Gen. Sci. UIVc.	Heat. Demonstrate elements, compounds and mixtures.	(Wed.) Write own definitions of elements, compounds and mixtures.
Biology VI (treble prd.)	*Zoology Vascular system frog.	(Frid.) B. Chap. 16.
Gen. Sci. III	*Eclipses. Sun and moon.	(Tues.) Diagram Solar eclipse.
Sept. 24 WED.		
Gen. Sci. UIVa	Heat Expansion of air at constant pressure. Charles' Law.	(Mon.) Read C. pp. 106-12.
Maths. Set 6. (d'ble prd.)	*Geometry. Write Theorem 18 and Converse Riders, p. 42. Algebra Ex. 9, 12-30.	(Frid.) Ex. 12, 2-30 (even numbers).
Chemistry LVa	*Practical. Crystals of Copper Sulphate, Potassium Nitrate and Lead Iodide.	(Mon.) Fair notes of practical.
Gen. Sci. UIVc	*Evaporation and replacement of water from plant and animal.	

Sept. 25 THURS.	CLASSWORK	HOMEWORK
Arithmetic LIVa	*Went through nos. 28 and 29. Further exercises on proportion.	(Thurs.) Diagram of soil to show capil- larity.
Gen. Sci. UIVa (d'ble prd.)	*Soil and work of earthworms. Set up wormeries.	
Biology. UVA (d'ble prd.)	Revision structure of leaf. Draw slides of leaf.	
Sept. 26 FRIDAY		
Arithmetic UIVa	*Area of parallelogram and trapezium.	(Fri.) R. & S Exer- cise 12, 17, 18, 20.
Maths. Set 6.	*Arithmetic. Area of circle.	(Mon.) Ex. 25, 10, 13, 15.
Biology. VI (treble prd.)	*Botany. Transpiration. Set up up experiments.	(Tues. R. & H. Ch. 8

For further reading

J. J. Findlay, *The Foundations of Education*, Vol. II, chap. xv.

W. T. Davies and T. B. Shepherd, *Teaching: Begin Here*, chapters
iv to vi.

CHAPTER 10

Homework

The subject of class-teaching raises the problem of homework with which it is closely connected. In 1937 the then Board of Education issued a pamphlet (No. 110) dealing with this subject, and based on an inquiry which had been carried out by its inspectors. It pointed out that homework had never been regarded by the Board as part of compulsory education; but that there had been an increasing tendency to set it, more in urban than in rural areas, and more in prosperous than in distressed areas. But the most significant fact was that the demand for homework was almost always determined by reasons external to the school—*i.e.* an examination of some sort. In the junior school this was the 'special place' test for selection to the grammar school; in the grammar school itself, it was the school-leaving examination set by a university. This was the fact, although only one child in nine proceeded from the junior school to the grammar school, and about one in twenty from the grammar school to the university. In the junior school children aged 9-10 were not infrequently coached for the special place examination. Parents were sometimes prepared to pay for outside tuition, and in any case out-of-school classes in English and (especially) arithmetic were not uncommon.

In what used to be called senior elementary schools there was less homework; but when it was set this again tended to be conditioned by some external examination — *e.g.* entry to

one of the Royal Dockyards, or artificer apprenticeships in the Royal Navy or the Royal Air Force. Many of the selective central schools were found to be setting homework, partly perhaps because they thought that this practice would raise their status and emphasise their resemblance to the grammar schools, and partly no doubt because they also took external examinations, such as those for the School Certificate and for various Society of Arts awards. The Board was very doubtful of the wisdom of such a programme for children selected to enter these central schools. They found, however, that in almost all grammar schools regular homework was demanded. As to its advisability there seemed to be some conflict of views among headmasters and headmistresses. Some thought that examination requirements made homework essential, whether it was desirable or not; others said that it is good training for pupils to acquire experience of working on their own initiative and not under the eye of a teacher. It was also the case (and this is the writer's experience) that parents tend often to demand homework and consider that the school is slack if it does not do this.

The Associations of Assistant Masters and Assistant Mistresses (A.M.A. and A.A.M.) have recommended the following scheme for the regulation of homework: pupils under 12, half an hour each evening; 12-14, one hour; 14-16, one and a half hours; and one week-day evening entirely free. The associations were not in favour of the abolition of homework - at any rate so far as the grammar school is concerned; but there is a minority (perhaps a growing one) among teachers in such schools who would like to see it given up completely, and who believe that the ordinary school work would not suffer thereby. The views of parents seem even more divergent; some (as has been

indicated) want their children kept up to scratch, and even to be driven in order to secure examination results; others complain that their offsprings are overworked and write indignant letters to the public press; others are content to leave things to the school. Parents' associations have helped to bring schools and parents into touch on this matter, so that each may understand the others' point of view. The parent who co-operates in the doing of his son's homework is perhaps less common than he used to be. It may be that parents have profited by the example of the father who, on being asked to give assistance in the working of a sum, replied: 'No, my son; it would not be *right*.'

The Board's inspectors found that practically every grammar school had definite homework schedules and that most of them invited the co-operation of the home to see that these were adhered to. On the whole it proved that girls spent more time on homework than boys, and were prone to give more time to it than the school required. In some day schools it was found that homework classes had been organised, on the lines of a boarding school 'preparation' period. This practice tends to make the school day a long one, and it seems at any rate undesirable to let the time for 'homework' run on directly after school hours. This practice is particularly to be deprecated when children have to travel far and therefore arrive home late. There might also arise the question: who is to take charge of these extra homework periods, and upon what terms? If, as we are sometimes told, we teach too much, perhaps the periods for actual instruction might be cut down so as to make room for as much preparation in normal school hours as shall remove the necessity for homework. It is hardly reasonable to expect pupils to work adequately at home when there is no place where one can be quiet, where there are several younger

children, where all the business of the family is going on around, where there is no cultural background, no books of reference, no encouragement to study, no understanding of, or sympathy with, the pupils' needs. Even in the old days almost every secondary day school contained a proportion of pupils who carried this handicap; but since the total abolition of fees for secondary education, due to the 1944 Act, this proportion has greatly increased. This fact – especially in schools where the proportion is large – may afford a strong argument for the provision of preparation periods during ordinary school hours; but it is a mistake to call this 'homework'. It is supervised preparation; and that is an entirely different thing.

In all kinds of schools one of the main dangers of an organised homework system is that it may interfere with due leisure, recreation, and opportunities for exercise in the open air. It may thus involve pressure on a child at a time when such pressure is most to be deprecated. The Board of Education report altogether condemned homework for juniors – *i.e.* children under eleven; and it recommended careful restriction in all types of secondary school. The dangers involved in homework are most pronounced in the grammar school, where the whole curriculum from the age of eleven-plus tends too often to be influenced by the ultimate demands of a school-leaving examination. The ideal of course, is to take examinations in one's stride and not to cram for them. However, if homework is to be set – and there is certainly something to be said for giving it to older children if conditions make it possible – it must be properly organised. To this end the following suggestions may be made: Proper homework time-tables must be drawn up and prescribed by the school authorities. There must be ready co-operation between the subject-teachers who set home-

work: we are all familiar with the forceful member of staff who sets so much homework, and under such dire penalties, that his pupils neglect everyone else's work. There should be careful supervision by the form-master or house-master to see that individual pupils are not being overworked; and he should be familiar with the home conditions under which they have to study. Full co-operation between school and home is essential. The parents should be informed clearly as to the amount of work which is expected each night, and should be requested to inform the school without fail if this amount is habitually exceeded or underspent. It is well also that the school should take some general interest in the pupils' evening activities. If the hours of homework are carefully regulated, or perhaps reduced, this should not be an encouragement to spending more time at the cinema, or gazing at the television, or lounging in the streets. Pupils should be stimulated to use their free time profitably – by taking exercise in the open air, by reading or by developing hobbies and cultural activities, by sharing in the social life of their community, in churches and chapels, in clubs and societies, in scouts and guides. Here again is another argument for the fullest co-operation between school and home. Sometimes the school can help by suggesting a voluntary holiday task – a book to read, a piece of music to learn, art or craft work to carry out, some map work or survey to achieve.

Homework must *never* be hastily improvised at the end of a lesson; it must always be thought out carefully beforehand. It should be definitely related to classwork and arise out of it; it should not imply new or unrelated work. For example, if a grammatical rule in Latin or French has been explained in class and some sentences to illustrate it have been worked orally, some similar sentences might be set as written home-

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work. If a rule in mathematics has been demonstrated during a lesson, exercises on it could be worked at home. In the science course homework may often take the form of writing up notes of an experiment conducted in class. If there seems to be a danger of too much written work, some form of learning can be set; but it should always be fully gone through and, if necessary, explained in class first. The teacher must never say: 'Learn the next page', or: 'Do the next ten principal parts', without further comment. Under all these safeguards, then – and given satisfactory home conditions – some case for homework can be made out. It has been found by experiment that fatigue increases progressively throughout the day, that relief afforded by recreation or change of subject is only temporary, and that all fatigue – whether muscular or mental – is ultimately of one kind and can be cured only by sleep. But if we can avoid these limits, homework may afford a valuable training for the older child. It is an introduction to *study*, and it helps the pupil to become a student. It is a step towards that 'self-education' of which Adams says that it should be the teacher's ultimate aim to foster in the pupil.¹ Sooner or later the child must learn to work unsupervised and on his own resources; and that can hardly be done under ordinary classroom conditions. In short, the aim of homework should be the development of initiative and self-reliance.

For further reading

Board of Education (Educational Pamphlets, No. 110) *Homework*.

¹ J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, p. 157.

CHAPTER I I

Examinations

A discussion of homework leads us to consider the examinations to which it is so often related. They are designed as a method of testing educational progress measured by the amount of knowledge acquired, or more generally of assessing intellectual capacity or ability. The great development of the examination system is quite a modern phenomenon. The earliest form of such tests was oral; the examination for a degree in a mediaeval university consisted in disputation or defending a thesis – a method which still forms part of the requirements for the M.A. or a doctorate. Even schoolboys had their disputations,¹ and the ordinary check on an individual pupil's progress was by questioning.² Written examinations began to be used at Oxford and Cambridge during the latter part of the eighteenth century, and the system was developed progressively during the nineteenth. The principle was gradually applied to entry to professions where hitherto apprenticeship had been customary – e.g. medicine and teaching. Public examinations for secondary schools date from 1853, when the College of Preceptors introduced its certificates, and it was followed by Oxford and Cambridge with their 'middle class' examinations in 1858. The principle of testing a school's efficiency by an

¹ See William Fitzstephen's 'Description' in J. Stow, *A Survey of London* (1598).

² Cf. *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act IV, Sc. i.

external examination was applied to 'elementary' schools in the crudest way and on a very large scale by the system of 'payment by results' which dates from the Revised Code of 1862.

All these examples are *qualifying* examinations. Such tests nowadays are used chiefly for university entrance or degrees, for diplomas awarded by other learned bodies, and for the leaving examinations from secondary schools which provide a kind of hall-mark for the pupils who has completed the course. From the point of view of the teacher in a secondary (especially a grammar) school, this last type of examination is of special interest. Before 1917 secondary schools could and did enter their pupils for many such tests – university 'locals' of various grades, examinations conducted by the College of Preceptors or the Society of Arts or South Kensington, university matriculations. The Board of Education introduced some sort of order and uniformity by recognising only eight university examining boards for the whole country, and co-ordinating them by a Secondary School Examinations Council. Grant-aided schools were allowed to take examinations only at the General and Higher Certificate stage; and normally whole forms, and not individual pupils, were to be entered for them. The issue became complicated when universities allowed the School Certificate, under certain conditions, to qualify for matriculation (*i.e.* university entrance), and the Higher Certificate for the Intermediate degree examination. A complete overhaul of the whole system has been provided by the institution of the General Certificate of Education (G.C.E.). This provides an examination at ordinary, advanced and scholarship level. Ordinary papers approximate to the credit standard of the old School Certificate and provide a test for pupils who have taken a subject as part of a general grammar school course

up to the age of sixteen. The advanced papers 'provide a reasonable test in the subject for pupils who have taken it as a specialist subject for two years of sixth form study'.¹ Scholarship papers are designed to give 'specially gifted pupils an opportunity of showing distinctive merit and promise'. All subjects at each stage are purely optional, and the General Certificate of Education granted to the pupil records the subjects and levels in which the candidate has satisfied the examiners. In response to a demand for some sort of public examination at a lower level than the G.C.E., which can be taken by pupils ending their school-life at the age of 15, a Certificate of Secondary Education has been instituted. It is administered by regional boards and is mainly controlled by serving teachers.

A second type of examination is the *competitive*. The development of this is due largely to the growth of democratic and socialist views, and to the spread of popular education during the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1868 Army Purchase was abolished and entry into the Civil Service was, for the most part, based on open competition. The tendency to restrict scholarships at Oxford and Cambridge to 'founder's kin', or to boys from specific schools or restricted areas, was largely undermined by the Oxford and Cambridge Acts of 1854 and 1856; many scholarships were thrown open and new ones were founded. The competitive examination is still used for scholarships, for appointments in the Civil Service and entry to Army, Navy or Air Force colleges; though much experiment has been made in recent times to supplement, or even supplant, the purely written type of test. But the outstanding example of the competitive examination is the selection of primary

¹ Report of S.S.E.C. (1947), p. 6. For details see also Ministry of Education, *Circular 168* (1948).

school pupils for various types of secondary education. When the 'free place' (afterwards 'special place') examination was first introduced in 1907 it was intended that this should be merely a qualifying test;¹ but the subsequent growth of the demand for secondary education made the test a highly competitive one, and in spite of modifications this remains largely true. The problem of selection for secondary education – at once most urgent and also most difficult – will, however, be discussed in greater detail in a subsequent chapter.²

The *internal* or *testing* examination provides a third type. In essence it is not qualifying or competitive, though it may contain such elements. It is designed mainly as a means by which the teacher can test the amount of knowledge retained by his pupils in a certain field, and may thus be able to check the results of his teaching. The aim is, as far as possible, to assess knowledge in that field and nothing else; and the 'ten questions on homework' afford a good example of what is meant. Such testing is a handy classroom expedient; but in most subjects it can be applied only to a limited extent. If we ask: How do you spell rhinoceros; or: What is the product of 4 and 6; or: How many times is 8 contained in 72; or: Is cat a noun or a preposition; or: What is the present participle of *avoir* or the perfect indicative of *dico*; or: Is boron an element or a compound – the answer is either right or wrong, and it can be definitely assessed as such. A clerk with a minimum of education and no special knowledge of the subject examined could mark the answers if he were given a key. But directly we get beyond this type of test the human factor – the personality of the examiner – is liable

¹ See H. C. Barnard, *A History of English Education from 1760*, pp. 256–7.

² See *infra* Chapter 26.

to nullify the objectivity of the process. It is obvious that complete objectivity can be carried further in mathematics and science, in grammar and elementary translation, than in such subjects as English composition and other original work, or in history. In the case of the latter, directly one gets beyond the simplest material one is examining not simply subject-matter, but also the power to write English – to express one's thoughts in a clear and interesting way.

Various methods have been recommended whereby objectivity in examining may be carried to the furthest possible limits. Dr. P. B. Ballard, for example, in his *The New Examiner*¹ gives a map with a number of towns and physical features numbered up to 30. A key giving thirty names is provided and one has first of all to identify the places. Then the pupil is asked to state which of three specified places stands highest above the sea-level, or what is the distance as the crow flies between two of them. Ballard also uses the 'missing word' technique. For example: 'The chief industry of the South Lancashire coalfield is the manufacture of — goods, because its ports face those of —, which originally supplied all the raw —.' Or: 'Leeds manufactures — goods, because it is near good grazing ground, is situated in the — coalfield and is on a tributary of the river —, the water of which is used for cleansing and dyeing purposes.' Yet these tests, elementary as they are, cannot be regarded as completely objective. In the first instance are the ports those of 'North America' or the 'United States'; and if the latter is right, is the former to be regarded as completely wrong? Is 'raw cotton' only to be accepted, and 'raw material' to be rejected? Is the river on which Leeds stands a tributary of the Ouse, or the Yorkshire

¹ pp. 210–11. The whole book is well worth reading.

Ouse, or possibly even of the Humber? For the coalfield is 'South Yorkshire' right, and 'West Riding' wrong?

Another method which has been recommended and of which Ballard gives examples,¹ is the 'true-false' test. Here a statement is made, and the candidate is asked to answer 'Yes', or 'No'. For instance, 'Our imports are mainly food and raw materials for manufacture'; here the answer is clearly 'Yes'. 'The west of Scotland has greater extremes of heat and cold than the east' – equally clearly 'No'. But what are we to say of 'A white collar keeps clean longer in Devon than in Staffordshire'? The air is probably cleaner in the rural areas of Staffordshire than in the dockyard towns of Plymouth and Devonport. In any case, this type of question surely misses the real point. The bare fact answer is of far less importance than the *reason* why (*e.g.*) one side of England tends to have a more extreme climate than the other. A development of the 'true-false' test is the knowledge quiz which has been popularised from time to time by the daily press. Here one is given a choice, and one has to underline the right answer. For example: 'A syllogism is (i) a lunatic asylum; (ii) a kind of drink; (iii) a form of reasoning; (iv) a Turkish soldier; (v) a patent fire-escape'. This – like most tests of the type – is cumbrous and takes a long time to set, and can be used in school to only a small degree. Too often the mountains are in labour and bring forth a ridiculous mouse.

So we are back again much where we were before the reformers appeared on the scene, though it is well to profit, as far as we can, from the suggestions which they make. However anxious we are to secure absolute objectivity, we are bound sooner or later to give our pupils practice in the essay type of answer which involves power to express oneself

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 212–14.

in English, as well as to give information about some subject of the curriculum. Every lesson is inevitably an English lesson, because one must use one's mother-tongue, whether orally or in writing. The power to write – at any rate as things are at present – becomes increasingly important as our pupils reach the stage of preparation for a school-leaving examination, or some other qualifying or competitive test. If so, our internal examining arrangements must be modelled largely on these external arrangements. The help and practice which pupils need can be developed out of their experience of note-taking. In the early stages notes will probably be dictated by the teacher, though sooner or later – according to the capacity of a particular class – notes will be written up by the pupils themselves, either as classwork or as homework. Notes must of course be notes; but the essay answer should be based on an outline of this type, so that it contains an underlying plan. When pupils have gained experience in this practice they may be set ordinary examination questions to answer; but before doing so they should be encouraged to sketch a plan of the proposed answer, on the same lines as those of the notes with which they have already been accustomed to deal. All this will help them to tackle efficiently the problem of answering questions in the qualifying or competitive examination for which they are preparing.

Examinations – other than the simplest forms of internal test – have been criticised (especially of late) for various reasons. It is said, for example, that they tend to encourage over-pressure and physical strain. Suicide is rare among children, but it is alleged that fear of examinations is one of the chief causes of it. Thus factors quite irrelevant to the purpose of the examination (*i.e.* the testing of the candidate's knowledge) may vitiate it. We all know of 'good' and 'bad'

examinees, and of cases of stage-fright in the examination room. A candidate may do himself less or more than justice owing to his disposition, his degree of fatigue, or the state of his health. Even the examination itself may produce an artificial atmosphere detrimental to its victims. The German educationist Lobsien once tested 54 boys aged 8 with twenty simple arithmetical examples, (a) under ordinary conditions in the course of a lesson, (b) after telling them that the test was a formal examination. He found that in the first case 39% of the answers were wrong, and in the second 50%. A further criticism is that examination syllabuses unduly restrict the schoolwork of potential candidates; they canalise the interests and capabilities of the pupil. The modern tendency is to give as much freedom as examination requirements permit, but the extent to which this can actually be done is limited. Moreover, a prescribed syllabus, laid down by an external authority, is often very cramping not only for the pupil, but also for the teacher. It is not always easy to do really *educational* work with a certificate form. Again, even if examinations do test knowledge efficiently – and that in itself has been questioned – it is maintained that they are by themselves inadequate in a competition to select the best candidates. Many things in life count beside mere school knowledge – general mental capacity (the psychologists' 'g') – personality, staying-power, conscientiousness, honesty, *savoir faire*, good manners and speech. These traits of character or acquirements are untouched by the examination machinery; and supplementary tests must be devised – so far as they can be devised – to supply the lack.¹

The most serious criticisms concern the reliability of the examination machinery itself, once we have got beyond the

¹ This problem is dealt with in greater detail below. See Chapters 26 and 27.

simple objective tests to which reference has already been made. The inherent weakness here is due to the personal factor of the examiner. Much attention was drawn to this in 1935 when there appeared the report of an International Conference on Examinations.¹ A committee of experts had carried out a careful and searching inquiry into public examinations of various types – for example, those for the school certificate and for special places in secondary schools, as well as university scholarship and degree examinations. The results were sufficiently startling. For example,² fifteen scripts which had already been awarded the same ‘middling’ mark in a certain school certificate examination were re-marked in turn and independently by fifteen examiners, who were asked to assign to them both marks and awards of failure, pass or credit. After an interval of twelve months or more the same scripts, after being renumbered, were again marked by these examiners. Whereas the scripts in the examination itself had all been given the same mark, the fifteen examiners on the first occasion allotted 42 different marks out of a maximum of 96, and these varied from 21 to 70. On the second occasion the total number of different marks was 44, and the variation from 16 to 71. Other experiments with both school-leaving and university examinations were carried out, and in many cases much unreliability was disclosed.

There is no doubt that this ‘examination of examinations’ does illustrate a weakness in any examination above the purely factual and objective level; but it may perhaps be questioned whether it is anything like as serious as the investigation seems to suggest. Most of the tests seem to have

¹ P. Hartog and E. C. Rhodes, *An Examination of Examinations*. See also C. W. Valentine, *The Reliability of Examinations*.

² Hartog and Rhodes, *op. cit.*, pp. 14–15.

been carried out under rather abnormal conditions and without some of the usual checks. The writer has had experience of three school certificate examinations, and of a large number of different university and training college examinations. The procedure in the former case (with slight variations) has been as follows: There is first a meeting of all examiners in a given subject under the chairmanship of the senior examiner. The questions to be set are fully discussed and an indication given as to how the marks are to be allotted. Then a number of sample scripts are passed round, and each assistant examiner records his valuation on a slip of paper (*not* on the script); and this is handed to the chief examiner. Next the assistants go to lunch, but the chief is left to look carefully through the assessments which each of his colleagues has given to each of the scripts. The afternoon is devoted to a discussion of the results. In the writer's experience there is usually a close correspondence between the marks given by each individual examiner, and he has never seen examples of variation in the least like those recorded in the Hartog and Rhodes inquiry. Each examiner then returns home and proceeds with the assessment of some 300 or 400 scripts. While this is in progress further scripts are sent round by post, and each examiner forwards to his chief an assessment of them – as was done at the afternoon meeting before the actual marking began. If any individual seems to be marking above or below the general standard the matter is at once taken up. He may be asked to revalue scripts or the chief examiner may adjust his assessments. It is the chief's duty also to keep a watch on border-line scripts – *i.e.* those with a chance of distinction or in danger of failing. It must, again, be remembered that when a school-leaving examination has been running for a number of years, and deals with some thousands of candidates every year, there is

justification for expecting some fairly standard percentage of candidates in each group – fail, pass, credit, distinction, or whatever it may be. Most examining authorities do in fact require an assessor to make out a 'distribution curve'; and if this shows marked irregularity or bunching, the marking may have to be reconsidered. It would seem then that, with safeguards such as these, much can be done to maintain a standard of marking and to counteract, at any rate to some extent, the 'personal factor'.

Similar precautions are also taken in all university degree and training college certificate examinations. Scripts are normally seen by more than one examiner and are fully discussed – particularly those on the border of a pass or a class. Often a question paper is divided into two parts and each is marked by a separate examiner or group of examiners. Moreover, in these cases the whole of the work of the candidates is under the supervision of an external examiner who is appointed because he has had considerable experience of examining in the particular subject, and whose decisions are based on a knowledge of the standards which obtain at a given level all over the country. For all these reasons it may be not merely inadvisable, but also unnecessary, or even impossible, to give up the 'essay' type of examination – especially if work is assessed in literal classes (α , β , γ , etc.) rather than by exact figures. Even in the school any attempt to concentrate on objective tests of the one-word variety, to the neglect of continuous composition, may cause a deterioration of standard in the writing of connected English.¹ There is some point in the statement that 'reliability of marking is important, but clearly it is not the only criterion which should be used to determine the nature of examinations'.

¹ Refer to *The Allocation of Primary School leavers to Courses of Secondary Education* (National Foundation for Educational Research), p. 24.

EXAMINATIONS

For further reading

Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools (Norwood Report, H.M.S.O., 1943).

The General Certificate of Education (Min. of Educ. Circular 168).

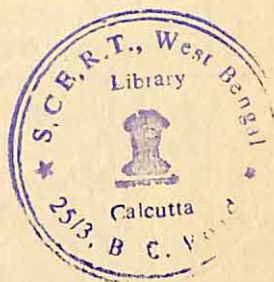
H.M.S.O. Examinations Bulletin No. 1 (*The Certificate of Secondary Education*).

P. B. Ballard, *The New Examiner*.

P. Hartog and E. C. Rhodes, *An Examination of Examinations*.

C. W. Valentine, *The Reliability of Examinations*.

J. L. Brereton, *The Case for Examinations*.



CHAPTER 12

The class

In origin teaching in school was largely a business of individuals. The pupils were taken by the master one at a time or in groups of two or three. Any picture of a school-room in the old days usually shows the master instructing one or two children at his desk, while the other pupils learn their work independently. Moreover, the practice of employing tutors was common, especially among wealthy families. It is recommended by authors as different as Rabelais, Locke and Rousseau. The Jesuits were mainly responsible for organising and developing systematic class-teaching; but elsewhere 'classes' were often so large that this kind of treatment was hardly possible. Keate had over 100 boys in his form at Eton in 1820, and even as late as 1834 nine masters had to share 570 boys in the upper school there. Under such conditions proper grading was out of the question and there was no possibility of organising the school in homogeneous groups. The monitorial system, again, with its vast mechanised classes, put the emphasis on cheapness and mass-methods of teaching.

Under modern conditions the class (or 'grade', as it is called in the United States) may be defined as a group of pupils meeting one or more times a week, and associated because they stand at roughly the same level of attainment in several subjects; or they may be grouped on an age-basis or an I.Q. basis, or on a combination of these methods.¹

¹ This subject is discussed in greater detail below (pp. 109-11).

'Form', as a synonym for 'class', is a term inherited from the older type of secondary school, and is still used in grammar schools. A 'set' is a group associated in respect of a single subject only; for example, three IV forms, which do most of their school subjects as 'forms', may be re-classified into new groups for (*e.g.*) mathematics or foreign languages. The term 'standard' was formerly used instead of 'class' in the English 'elementary' schools; but with the reorganisation due to the Hadow Report (1926) it has gone out of use.

The ideal size for a class, as determined by experience, seems to be between twenty and thirty, though much must depend on the age and type of the pupil. The Ministry of Education in its *School Grant Regulations* prescribed a class maximum of 40 pupils for all but the most senior children in a primary school, and of 30 pupils in a secondary school. These numbers, owing to economic factors, are often exceeded in practice. It is not in the least obvious why classes for younger pupils should have higher maxima than those for older ones. In any case the size of the class may admit of variation according to the subject which is being taught. In the science laboratory or the handicraft room or the domestic science centre, where individual needs are great and much apparatus is necessary, smaller 'sets' may be indicated. On the other hand, the music or physical education lesson may gain something if a group of classes is combined. The important thing for the teacher to remember is that, whatever the organisation, the unit in the school is not the class, but the individual. Although the pupil is taught in a class this process should be based on the teacher's knowledge of him as a distinct person.

Each pupil, then, has his own personality. But this as, Adams points out, implies an actor and an audience,¹

¹ J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, p. 115. The

because the 'persona' was the mask worn by the actor in classical times and expressing the type of character which he was impersonating. The term survives in the phrase 'dramatis personae' – the characters in the play. We can isolate the *ego* in thought, but in real life it is always acting upon others and being reacted upon by them. As Aristotle said, man is by nature a 'political animal';¹ and that means that he can realise his full personality only in a society. People often tend to react differently according to the number of those with whom they have to deal. Again it is a common experience that the behaviour of human beings in groups is different from that of the same human beings as individuals. This explains lynchings, Mafeking nights, Nuremberg rallies, Beate screaming, and similar instances of mass hysteria. The use of the radio and other modern propaganda devices has emphasised the dangers of this tendency. But the fact illustrates the existence of a crowd psychology, as distinct from the psychology of the individual. As Adams again pertinently points out, the psychological crowd is not simply the sum of its constituent individuals. It is a chemical compound (like H_2O which forms water), not a mechanical mixture, like pepper and salt which, when combined, undergo no change. Demagogues and dictators know this and seek to profit by it; but that is no reason why the teacher also should not turn the situation to account. The class is a crowd, and not merely an assemblage of individuals. Yet it has a special homogeneity because its members are of approximately the same age and have the same aims and traditions, being attached to the same school, associated in the same tasks, and sharing the same life. All

¹ Arist., Pol. I, ii § 9: *ἄνθρωπος φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῷον*.

whole of chapter V (pp. 113–35) is very well worth reading. What is said above owes much to it.

this helps to intensify the elements held in common, and should play into the hands of a skilful teacher. Psychologists tell us that imitation is the driving force of crowd activity, for no one likes to be 'odd man out' in such an environment; and suggestion is the stimulus which guides imitation. A psychological crowd is always in a highly suggestible state; and it is by the use of suggestion that the teacher can manipulate his class with a minimum display of authority.¹

It has already been said that as teachers we must never lose sight of the individual in the class. We must remember that, as Locke said, 'each man's mind has some peculiarity as well as his face'.² But in actual practice the group of pupils is continually combining into a class or disintegrating into a group of individuals.³ For example, if the pupils by question and answer are helping to build up the framework of the lesson, or are acting a play of Shakespeare in class, or singing a glee in parts, they are a crowd – a chemical compound. But when they are working exercises on their own, or learning memory work, or reading silently, they are a group of isolated individuals – a mechanical mixture. The skilful teacher, in the course of his lessons, will treat his pupils first in one way and then in another. It is the unskilful teacher who finds that the class itself determines which of the methods is to be adopted.

If we are to group our pupils in classes we must have some principles of classification. This is called grading. As has been indicated, the age of the children concerned is often made a primary consideration. If it has been laid down that secondary education – whatever the pupil's ability – is to

¹ This topic should be followed up in M. W. Keatinge, *Suggestion in Education*, pp. 99–102 *et passim*.

² *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, § 217.

³ See J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, p. 130.

begin at the chronological age of eleven plus, and that the course ends in the grammar school at sixteen and in the modern school at fifteen, then a cut-and-dried five-year or four-year course is almost inevitable. The syllabus is planned out in yearly sections, and normally the pupil will advance at the end of each year to the next section of the course. Grading by age alone is rarely satisfactory, because a given pupil may excel in one direction or be supernormal or subnormal in all. To meet such a situation the system of parallel streams has been devised. According to the size of the school there may be two, three, four – or even more – of these at each stage. It is thus possible to grade together (*e.g.*) the bright, normal and dull pupils in A, B, and C streams. It is sometimes considered unwise to adopt a nomenclature which suggests this. Pupils in a C class may be content to regard themselves as ‘duds’; and parents also dislike to think that their children are in a C form. To meet this objection some schools use the year of the course (I, III, V, etc.) with the number or letter of the classroom, or a colour, or the class-teacher’s initials, or some other non-committal sign of differentiation. Yet it may be doubted how far such devices really deceive those concerned. If there is a difference in the curriculum of parallel streams, perhaps this may be indicated – *e.g.* IV Latin, IV German, V Classical, V Commercial.

Another consideration which may be taken into account in grading pupils is their proficiency in one or two key subjects – *e.g.* in English and mathematics, which are normally the two academic subjects taken by candidates in the examination for selection to secondary schools. In that case, provision for subsequent variations in attainment or ability may perhaps be achieved by re-classification into sets. At the not-unknown school where the writer was educated the headmaster, Henry Weston Eve, re-classified every boy for every

subject, so that no two boys in the school had the same timetable.¹ The drawing-up of these time-tables was the head's chief hobby and occupied the whole of his summer holidays. Unfortunately his handwriting was totally illegible, so that the confusion that reigned in the school during the first few days of the Autumn Term is more easily imagined than described.

Finally, an intelligence test may be used as one of the factors in determining grading. It must, however, be remembered that this tests general intelligence. It can therefore hardly be used by itself, because other factors – *e.g.* attainment, special aptitudes, aesthetic appreciation – enter into ordinary classwork and must be taken into consideration. The best results will probably be achieved when age, the result of a key-subject test, and the pupil's I.Q. are all taken into account; and when on such a basis the children are drafted to the appropriate stream.

Promotion is a subject allied to grading. If the syllabus is divided into yearly blocks, and if the class as a unit covers one of these blocks in each school-year, then it will be normal to promote at the end of the year, and not during it. This provides a strong argument for admitting new pupils, as far as possible, only at the beginning of the school year; unless, of course, a transfer is being made from another similar school, owing to removal or some similar cause. If a pupil has progressed or fallen back conspicuously as compared with the average of the form, promotion may be made at the beginning of the new year from a B stream to an A stream, or to a C stream – *e.g.* from a IIIb to a IVa or a IVc. Such regrading may be indicated within a few weeks of the beginning of the school year, especially in the case of pupils about whom little has hitherto been known – *e.g.* new entrants. The school may easily have made an initial mistake

¹ See P. A. Barnett (ed.) *Teaching and Organisation*, pp. 21–2.

of grading in such cases, and this should be rectified. But once the class has fairly started on its work as a homogeneous whole, alterations should be avoided as much as possible. Demotion, and retention for a second year at the same stage of the course, are alike undesirable unless absolutely necessary. Such practices involve the pupil in doing the whole, or at any rate part, of the year's work over again; and that may result in a loss of interest and self-respect. If it is necessary, it argues faulty grading at the beginning of the year on the part of those responsible – a greater reflection on the school authorities than on the pupil concerned. But all the same it may just occasionally prove desirable in the case of children who have lost much time through illness, or with those who have entered half-way through the year's course by transfer from other schools. Double promotion is also rarely wise, even with the brightest pupils. They miss a whole year's section of the syllabus, and this must be made good sometime and somehow; also the continuity of the child's work is broken up, and overstrain may be induced. Premature blossoming is good for neither plants nor children. The fixing at sixteen of the minimum age for entry to the school-leaving examination met with considerable (and just) criticism; but at any rate it discouraged the tendency to press bright little boys and girls who arrived at the sixth form before they were fifteen, and who, however outstanding they might be intellectually, were not mature enough in experience to profit fully by the sort of work which is done there.

For further reading

- J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, chap. v.
 M. W. Keatinge, *Suggestion in Education*.
 M. Sturt and E. C. Oakden, *Modern Psychology and Education*
 chapters III and IV.

CHAPTER 13

Alternatives to class teaching

It has become somewhat the fashion among educationists nowadays to disparage class-teaching as being conventional or artificial. The great development of 'activities' in the primary school has had its repercussions in secondary education, and some teachers tend to feel that the traditional system of class-teaching limits their own freedom to experiment and the development of individuality in their pupils. This may in some measure be true; but in view of what has already been said it may be maintained that collective teaching is not necessarily detrimental to the freedom either of the teacher or of the taught. Within limits it may even foster this, especially in subjects which demand what Adams calls 'inspirational' treatment¹ – e.g. literature, religious knowledge, appreciation of music and art. Moreover, so long as the class can be kept as the unit of organisation, it can be taught as a group or de-integrated at will. It will be well, however, to discuss some of the various modern schemes which have been put forward as alternatives to ordinary class teaching.

One of the earliest was the system of Differential Partnership, devised by Norman MacMunn about 1914 when he was a master at Stratford-on-Avon Grammar School. The whole class is divided up into pairs of pupils who are partners

¹ See J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, p. 141. The whole of Chapter VI (pp. 136–61) is, again, well worth reading.

— and not rivals, like the *æmuli* of the Jesuit schools.¹ These partners work together, aided by 'partnership-books' which supply a plan of procedure. The pupils take it in turn to catechise and answer each other, so that the individual may be as little as possible receptive and passive. MacMunn developed his scheme in schools of his own, first in this country and afterwards in Italy; but he was throughout handicapped by lack of funds, and his premature death in 1925 brought his experiment to an end. Yet his views, which are set out in detail in *The Child's Path to Freedom*, contain much that is worthy of consideration; and there is little doubt that some scheme of the differential partnership type, if used from time to time and in moderation, may do much to relieve and diversify ordinary class teaching. In the science lesson it is already common for pupils to work in pairs in many kinds of laboratory work; and the principle could profitably be extended to other subjects. The danger of this — as of all 'methods' — is of making it a fetish.

The Dalton Plan is another — a better known — device. It was put forward about 1920 by Miss Helen Parkhurst who had been influenced by Madame Montessori and had worked with her; and the earliest experiments were tried out in the High School at Dalton, Massachusetts. The correct title is the Dalton *Laboratory* Plan, because the classrooms are regarded not as places where formal teaching is given to formal groups, but as workshops or laboratories where pupils carry out practical work with the aid of the necessary books and apparatus which they find there. The plan prescribes a contract or assignment of work which is to be carried out by an individual pupil in a given period — for example, a school month of twenty days. Subdivisions may also be indicated. The contract is usually entered on a

¹ See *infra*, pp. 136–137.

printed or duplicated form; and this is supplied to the pupil who is then free to do the work in his own way and in his own time. As Miss Parkhurst says: 'Unless a pupil is permitted to absorb knowledge at his own rate of speed he will never learn anything thoroughly. Freedom is taking one's own time. To take someone else's time is slavery.'¹ Thus the pupil is at liberty to move from one subject room to another, and to stay as long as he pleases. There are no bells to announce the beginning and end of periods. Class meetings are, however, held about once a week, and these periods are devoted to debates, discussions and other activities (*e.g.* a play reading) in which the class as a whole can participate.

What, then, in the Dalton Plan is the part which the teacher should play? Obviously the planning of the assignments will involve much thought and professional skill. In the actual school routine the teacher's duty is to 'preserve an atmosphere of study' – *i.e.* to keep order – to give information as to the use of departmental equipment, to make suggestions with regard to methods of attacking particular problems, and, when the need actually arises, to provide full explanation of a point and show its relation to the general principles of the subject. At the end of the prescribed period the assignment is supposed to have been covered, and the pupil must be prepared to be tested on what he has done. The scheme lays a very large amount of responsibility on pupils and puts them on their honour to carry out the work. The younger children are expected to sign a definite contract which is returned to them as soon as the job is completed.² We may perhaps ask what happens to the pupils who do not carry out their contract, or who do not show up the work at the right time, or who fail to pass the test at the end of the

¹ H. Parkhurst, *Education on the Dalton Plan*, p. 16.

² For an example see *op. cit.*, p. 29.

prescribed period. Miss Parkhurst says little on this point in her book; but Adams suggests that a defaulter 'can be made to do his time-table work in the classroom under the eye of the teacher, while the respectable pupils are doing their free hours' work.¹ But this would imply an abandonment of the principle of 'freedom' which Miss Parkhurst herself calls 'the first principle of the Dalton Plan.'

In Daltonism's insistence on the 'freedom of the child' the influence of Montessori is very marked. According to her, 'auto-education' is the only real education. The child should choose whatever occupation interests him and continue to play or work at it without interference, unless he disturbs other children. The Montessori method² has been applied almost exclusively in the education of very young children, but the Dalton Plan carries some of its fundamental principles into the realm of secondary education. In this country it was adopted particularly in the Streatham County Secondary School for Girls – a grammar school containing over 700 pupils. The scheme seems less well suited to the primary school; and it is noteworthy that in the examples of Daltonism, as applied to the 'elementary' school, given in Miss Parkhurst's book, the age of the pupils concerned is from eleven upwards. It might seem particularly well adapted to VI form work. It may also be best suited to subjects like history, geography, grammar, and exercises where notes and written work, properly planned and arranged, are demanded. For example, if a class has been working at the regional geography of Asia on normal lines, the pupils may be asked to 'write up' the geography of Japan under regional headings and on Dalton lines. The method (as Findlay

¹ J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, p. 180.

² Refer to M. Montessori, *The Montessori Method*, or D. C. Fisher, *A Montessori Mother*. For a criticism see W. Boyd, *From Locke to Montessori*.

points out)¹ has been 'recommended as a fine device for preparing pupils to pass Certificate Examinations: its principles are in essence those followed in Correspondence Courses' – though in the latter the tutor who sets the assignment and tests the resultant work is at a distance from the pupil. Yet, in spite of its limitations, Daltonism is obviously right in its stress on individual effort and responsibility, and in its attempt to secure some measure of independence of time-factors and other limiting conditions. The wise teacher will experiment with the method, using it when it seems indicated, but not adopting it in its entirety. Like most 'methods', it may be in danger of over-systematisation. The stereotyped and published 'assignment books' remind one of Montessori's apparatus, or – to go further back – Froebel's 'gifts'.

The Project Method is another device to by-pass ordinary class-teaching. Like Daltonism, it hails from the United States and it owes much to the educational philosophy of John Dewey. A 'project' seems first to have been defined in 1918 by W. H. Kilpatrick of Teachers College, Columbia, when he described it as a 'wholehearted purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment'. In practice this means setting before the pupils (or letting them choose) a problem or a piece of work, and then solving it or carrying it out by co-operative activity. There is no longer any syllabus prescribed from above and forming the basis of a series of formal lessons given by the teacher to the class. As a large-scale example of the method in action we may summarise an account of a project undertaken in a school in New York City.² It all starts with a 'bright boy of seven' asking: 'How do we get silk?' The question is put to the school assembly,

¹ J. J. Findlay, *The Foundations of Education*, Vol. II, p. 115.

² *Teachers College Record*, vol. xxi, pp. 56-8.

but the answers volunteered do not appear satisfactory. Accordingly the third grade gets to work and, after consultation with various teachers, and the securing (by a girl in the eighth grade) of an illustrative exhibit from the Museum of Natural History, a paper on 'How we get Silk' is prepared and read out to the whole school. A primary grade then poses the question: 'How is raw silk changed into the material that we know as silk?' The third grade again undertake to supply the answer. As a result, a handloom is investigated and put to use; this leads on to the making of raffia mats and rugs. Various types of loom are compared; and this finally involves an investigation of weaving machinery and a visit to a mill. The points in this account which call for special notice are the clearness of aim which unifies all this multifarious activity; the fact that the class tends to disappear as a unit and the whole school may be drawn in to co-operate; and the added interest and apperceptive 'richness' of work done under these conditions. But it would obviously be difficult, if not impossible, to plan any kind of coherent school course if the project method were adopted on a large scale. In the example quoted the work of the whole school is affected just because a bright boy of seven asks a question.

It should be remembered that many subjects (especially scientific or mathematical ones) must be presented in *logical* order if they are to be properly understood. A project might touch such a subject at any stage of its development. Thus a progressive course could never be ensured if projects were continually allowed to interrupt it. But *within* such a planned course or curriculum the project method may be used with excellent effect; or it may be carried out alongside class instruction of the normal kind. For example, if a boy wants to make a rabbit-hutch or repair a wireless set, he can

bring his school studies into the project with good effect. An investigation may be made by a class (or even by a whole school) into a local industry – its location, history, raw materials, markets, motive-power, conditions of labour, etc.; or a regional survey of the school neighbourhood can be carried out on these lines. In the primary school the grocer's shop and the post-office are stock examples of projects suited to young children – or they can investigate some such topic as 'transport' or 'costume'. The possibilities at any stage are innumerable.¹ The method can be used to teach the pupil how to use books and collect information, how to realise that history and geography and mathematics and art – and all the rest – can be correlated. It helps to stimulate and keep alive the activity and ingenuity of the individual, and at the same time to promote co-operative effort. But by itself it would leave huge gaps in the pupil's equipment and militate against the logical development of those more abstract studies which he must tackle particularly in the secondary school. As the curriculum becomes more elaborate and systematic it is the more necessary to devote attention to each subject as an organic whole. This makes both for clearness and for economy of effort.

An exhaustive account of suggested alternatives to class teaching is neither possible nor desirable. The 'Howard Plan', introduced by Dr. O'Brien Harris into the County Secondary School, Clapton, makes the 'house', instead of the class, the unit of school organisation, and thus substitutes a vertical classification for the usual horizontal one. The details of the scheme may be studied in Mrs. Harris's book entitled *Towards Freedom*. Passing reference may also be made to Caldwell Cook's 'Play Way'² which owes something to

¹ Consult Jean Armstrong, *Projects and their place in Education*.

² See H. Caldwell Cook, *The Play Way*.

Froebel; it may lend itself to the teaching of literature and history, but could hardly be applied in mathematics or science. It is also best suited to younger pupils (preferably those of the 'prep. school' type); it is not without significance that Mr. Cook calls his boys 'littlemen'. The 'Play Way' has not 'caught on' to any considerable extent. This is equally true – so far, at any rate, as this country is concerned – of the 'platoon plan', which is part of a scheme devised by William Wirt, who in the early years of the present century was superintendent of schools at Gary, Indiana, U.S.A. In his scheme the whole of a school is divided into two approximately equal groups, or platoons, of pupils; and the organisation is so devised that while one platoon is receiving ordinary instruction in the classroom (or 'homeroom', as Wirt called it), the members of the other platoon are participating in more free activities, carried on in specially equipped rooms or playgrounds. On a given signal, at specified times during the day, the two platoons change places. Its advocates claim that the plan not only effects economies in school administration, but also contributes to the all-round development of children. Perhaps we can leave the matter there. Finally, the Winnetka Plan,¹ which also hails from across the Atlantic and takes its name from a residential suburb near Chicago, is a scheme whereby the gifted child is allowed to progress somewhat more rapidly than the rest of the class, even though 'for the sake of his social adjustment' he is not promoted to the next grade. In addition to the ordinary work he is allowed 'special assignments, electives and responsibilities'. In short, the scheme combines a modified form-time-table with a certain amount of Daltonism. Conversely, slower pupils, instead of being demoted, are given a some-

¹ A standard work on this subject is A. M. Smits-Jenart, *Le système pédagogique de Winnetka* (Brussels).

what easier programme and proceed at their own pace. Expedients of this kind are familiar to any teacher of experience, and need hardly be dignified with a transatlantic label.

For further reading

- J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Education Practice*, chap. vi.
A. H. T. Glover, *New Teaching for a New Age*.
A. E. Meyer, *The Development of Education in the Twentieth Century*,
parts I and II.
H. Parkhurst, *Education on the Dalton Plan*.
J. Armstrong, *Projects and their Place in Education*.
T. H. Etherington, *In and Out of School*.

CHAPTER 14

The use of illustration and apparatus. School broadcasting. Teaching machines and programmed learning

The term 'illustration' is used in teaching in a technical sense, and means making clear or intelligible by the employment not merely of pictures or examples, comparison or analogy, but also by the use of apparatus of any kind – e.g. the blackboard, instruments or diagrams. In short, it includes anything which, by an appeal to the senses or imagination of the pupil, sheds light on a piece of description or reasoning. Working from the concrete to the abstract, the chief visual types of illustration may be classified as follows:

(i) Actual objects – what the German educationists call *Realien*. These leave nothing to the imagination; the pupil can observe the object carefully and experiment with it and describe accurately what he observes. For instance, in order to demonstrate the porosity of some rocks and the impermeability of others, a test may be devised with actual specimens of sandstone and clay. A lesson on a Norman castle can be based on a visit to a real example in the school neighbourhood. The danger is that what seems to be an 'actual object' may not 'illustrate' in the full teaching sense. A stuffed rabbit – or even a live one – in the classroom gives the children only a limited idea of what the real rabbit is; there is no direct observation of its habitat or mode of life in

its own environment; and those facts form an essential part of its natural history. Demonstration from *Realien*, under the title of 'object lessons,'¹ were a popular feature of the old 'elementary' school curriculum. Often they were not object lessons at all, but rather the imparting of a heterogeneous collection of information without any reference to the child's experience or previous knowledge. For example, lessons might be given on silk or glass, illustrated by a card on which were stuck a few oddments of material in the successive stages of manufacture. The reality behind all this was often almost as vague as if a purely verbal lesson had been given.

(ii) Models, or solid representations of objects, leave something to the child's imagination because of the idea of scale which is involved; but they tend to give very clear ideas. A model of a Shakespearian theatre, or a set of puppets in Elizabethan costume, is worth a good deal of description or even of pictorial illustration. Models are also valuable because they afford an outlet for the pupil's constructive interest; and for this reason wherever possible they should be made by the children themselves, or at any rate with their co-operation. The mere process of making helps to increase the expository value of a model as an illustration. The author once got some boys to make a model theodolite out of a taper-tin;² and although this had not the accuracy of a proper instrument, the makers probably understood its principles more easily and more thoroughly than pupils who had learnt them from an orthodox theodolite. It should be noted that models may be used not only to represent actual *Realien*, such as a castle, a church, a mediaeval manor, a railway lay-out, a piece of geographical relief, but may also

¹ Read P. B. Ballard, *The Changing School*, chap. XVII.

² See H. C. Barnard, *Principles and Practice of Geography Teaching*, pp. 118-19.

illustrate an abstract principle, such as the atomic theory or the varying angle of the sun's rays at different periods of the year. The student in training should keep a look-out for examples of models of all kinds, which can be seen in the schools which he visits; and, as far as possible, he should make replicas of any which he could use in teaching his own special subject. It would be well also if each individual school were to build up its own collection of 'teaching models' which would be available for any member of staff who wished to use them. This would form a valuable adjunct to a teacher's library.

(iii) Pictorial illustrations may be of many kinds – pictures, drawings, photographs, lantern-slides, film-strips, screen projections through the medium of the episcope or epidiascope, chalk sketches on the blackboard, etc. Material of this kind should also be systematically collected and classified. It is often useful also to know what is available at the local museum or at the area Institute of Education or the headquarters of the local education authority. From all these sources – at any rate in educationally enlightened districts – the teacher may be able to borrow pictorial matter of various kinds which may prove valuable to him in his work. It is possible that Galton was right¹ in stating that children tend to be more 'visile' than educated adults, in whom the power of pictorial imagery seems gradually to atrophy; if so, our pupils should be encouraged to 'think in pictures'; and this is, of course, particularly true of the lesson in history, English literature, or geography. Pictorial illustration, in some form or other, will often help to focus the attention of pupils on the work in hand; whereas a verbal description, unaided by this, may result in boredom.

¹ See *supra*, p. 78.

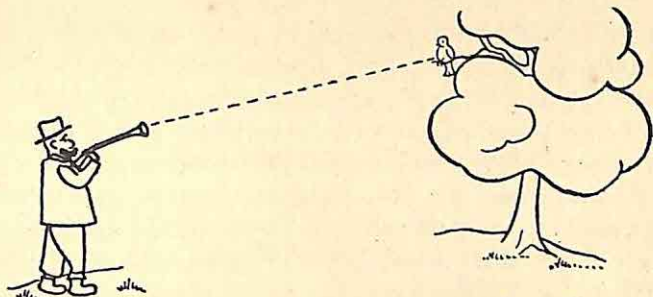
Of particular value is the picture which can be easily imported into the classroom in the form of a film-strip. A large and increasing amount of such material is now available. For information with regard to film-strips and projection apparatus reference should be made to the publications of the National Committee for Visual Aids in Education (33, Queen Anne St., W.1) and the Educational Foundation for Visual Aids (also at 33, Queen Anne St., W.1). There seems some reason for believing that for ordinary teaching purposes the silent film is preferable to the sound film. The latter may lend increased reality to verbal images where the sound is part of the total impression to be conveyed; for example, in a film entitled 'Some Birds of the Countryside,' the songs of the birds shown are included. But otherwise there may be some strain in requiring the child to look and listen at the same time; and a spoken commentary, though often helpful, tends to impose restrictions on the teacher who may prefer to develop a film-strip lesson in his own way. The provision of school television programmes has facilitated the introduction of the sound-film into the classroom; but it would seem that, except for providing a general background to more detailed work, the film-strip, used for a comparatively short time to illustrate some point in the course of a verbal lesson of the normal type, is usually most effective;¹ but there is no need to be restricted to one type of technique in the use of film-strips.

There are, indeed, times when the still picture is to be preferred to the 'movie'. For example, a physical geography lesson on glaciation would probably be best illustrated by a

¹ There are some helpful suggestions as to the actual technique of a film-strip lesson in J. H. Panton, *Modern Teaching Practice and Technique*, pp. 170-3.

series of photographs, taken from different viewpoints, showing the glacier at its origin, at an icefall, at its snout, the moraines and crevasses, the glaciated valley, and so on. But if the subject of the lesson were 'mountaineering', and one had to indicate the preparations required, the nature of the activity to be described, the difficulties encountered during the ascent, then a moving picture, if it were available, would be highly desirable. A danger to be avoided in all this type of work is that of over-complication – *i.e.* presenting at one time more material than the child can deal with satisfactorily. This can even be the case with the still picture. With younger children a specially-prepared drawing is often more effective than a photograph, because they can more easily pick out those particular details to which it is desired that attention should be drawn. But a photograph contains everything, and the child sometimes finds it difficult to appreciate the point for which the illustration is designed, or is distracted by irrelevant details. It is well to bear these considerations in mind when choosing a text-book for classroom use. It must also be remembered that publishers sometimes include a picture, not primarily for its teaching value, but because it is thought to enhance the attractiveness of the book or even because they happen to have a particular block in hand.

In view of what has been said, the blackboard sketch has often much to recommend it. It illustrates (or should illustrate) one particular teaching point. It is not in the least necessary to be an artist to execute sketches of this type, though if one has any talent in this direction it is worth cultivating, for blackboard drawings may prove a valuable teaching aid. Here, for example, is a sketch method of introducing the difference between the object and the complement in an elementary Latin lesson:



The farmer wounds the dove

SUBJECT TRANSITIVE VERB OBJECT

(The action passes over from the subject to the object)

AGRICOLA vulnerat COLUMBAM

Nominative

Accusative

[Reflexive ('boomerang') pronouns would be treated at a much later stage.]



The boy SUBJECT PUER Nominative

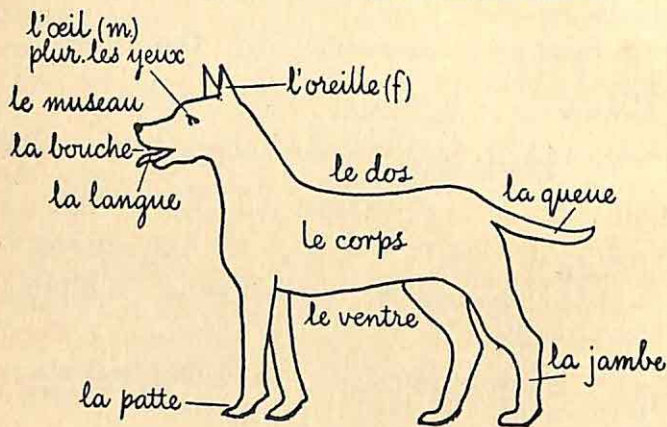
became INTRANSITIVE
VERB factus est

a sailor COMPLEMENT NAUTA Nominative

(Here the action does *not* pass over from the subject to the object – the verb is *intransitive*. 'Sailor' is another name for the subject 'boy', and therefore is in the same case as the subject). Now *complete* the picture of the boy by adding details to turn him into a sailor.



However badly one draws, one need never hesitate to use the blackboard in this way. It helps to keep a class good-humouredly amused, and they may remember the point of the sketches better than if a purely verbal demonstration is given. The pupils also may be allowed – or even encouraged – to make similar sketches, if they can, in their own note-books. For example, some useful vocabulary work could be set as a homework exercise, with some such result as follows:



Mon petit chien qui s'appelle Polydore

Apart from illustrative work of this kind, the blackboard should be used for words and phrases or summaries or mathematical demonstrations or other work which is required during the course of a lesson; but it should be cleaned off as soon as it is no longer needed. It is no uncommon experience when one goes into a classroom to see the board covered with odd scraps left over from previous lessons. These not only present a most untidy appearance but also tend to distract the attention of the pupils from the

point immediately under consideration. Occasionally some blackboard work may have to be prepared beforehand, or left over to be finished during the next lesson; but normally what appears should be part of the lesson itself and put up *pari passu* with it, and then rubbed off.¹ It is good classroom manners to clean one's board completely at the end of a lesson, and not leave this job to one's successor. There are advantages in having a classroom equipped with as much blackboard space as possible; even some of the walls may profitably be painted so as to be available as blackboard. Teachers, whatever their special subjects, should also make use of coloured chalks. Contrasted points or headings may be emphasised in this way. At the same time it is worth remembering that some colours – *e.g.* violet and green – are often invisible at the back of the room or in artificial light. The teacher should experiment by viewing them under such conditions in an empty classroom before actually using them in a lesson.

(iv) Diagrams, maps and graphs. Illustrations of this kind are very abstract and leave much to the child's understanding and interpretation. One must therefore be careful when using them to ensure that the pupils are capable of seeing the point intended. A diagram or a map which makes things clearer for an adult is often quite incomprehensible to a child. There is, for example, a danger in giving map-work to pupils who simply copy unintelligently what is set, and learn to reproduce the map by rote. Diagrammatic work of whatever kind should be as simple as possible, and it should illustrate one point, or several points which are

¹ A useful piece of apparatus consists of two hinged blackboards, surfaced on both sides, and folding over another blackboard – like a triptych. A drawing or summary can thus be prepared on the central board and covered with the hinged side boards until it is needed. The outer side of the hinged boards can be used so long as the apparatus is shut.

related. Younger children may be able to benefit from a 'line of time' in the history lesson, or even from a diagram to illustrate the relative proportions of wheat imports into the United Kingdom from various foreign countries. But diagrams and graphs are usually so abstract that their use will be largely confined to senior pupils. One must always guard against the danger that the diagram may not 'illustrate' at all, but may even increase the pupil's difficulty in understanding what it is intended to enlighten.

There are other dangers in the use of illustrations, whatever form they take. An over-elaborate picture, model or diagram, for instance, is more likely to obscure than to illustrate. On the whole, the simplest illustrations are best, and where possible they should be made or worked out in the course of the lesson and in the presence of the class – e.g. the drawing of a map or a diagram, or the building up of a model. Illustrations, again, must not be allowed to take the pupil's interest from the subject upon which they are designed to shed light. They should be kept in reserve and out of sight until the time, in the course of the lesson, when they are to be used. Then exhibit the illustration, and if it is likely to be interesting in itself, let the class look at it for a moment before its purpose is explained to them. Once it has served that purpose it should be put aside, and not allowed to attract further attention. Finally, it is well to remember that illustrations *per se* do not make a good lesson. Too many of them may render it difficult for the pupil to see the wood for the trees. Only such should be included as are strictly relevant and can be properly used in the time at the teacher's disposal.

Illustrative aids to teaching are not confined to those which are apprehended by the sight; and it will therefore be convenient in this chapter to refer also to other techniques

in which the appeal is made to the ear. The value of the gramophone is obviously greatest in the teaching of music, modern languages and literary appreciation, and in speech training. The advantage of the record is that, like the film-strip, it can be selected specifically in order to illustrate some particular point, or form the material for a lesson chosen by the teacher. It can be stopped or started at any point, and is therefore under the control of the teacher in the building-up of the lesson. In the school broadcast, on the other hand, one is very much in the hands of the B.B.C.¹ Strictly speaking, a 'broadcast lesson' is a contradiction in terms; for a lesson implies constant reaction between teacher and taught, the possibility of spontaneous development, and the treatment of individual members of a class in different ways according to their special needs or capabilities. Yet it is equally obvious that there must be great possibilities in school broadcasting, for it enables the teacher to enlist the services of experts and first-hand authorities. The B.B.C. issues its syllabuses of educational broadcasts, and handbooks to accompany them, free of charge. Application should be made to the School Broadcasting Council for the United Kingdom, Portland Place, London W.1.

Speaking generally, it will probably be found that the broadcast lesson is of greater use to the primary than to the secondary school; and that for several reasons. In a school where the specialist system is not developed – at any rate to any extent – the teacher who has to take a number of subjects, none of them to a very high standard, and to the same group of children, will often be glad to let his class hear what

¹ In what follows the author has drawn considerably on what he has said already about school broadcasting in *Principles and Practice of Geography Teaching* (pp. 65-7). It is reproduced here by kind permission of the publishers, the University Tutorial Press.

a specialist has to say. In a primary school, also, the class remains with the same teacher during the greater part of the day, and this fact makes it easier for him to accommodate the time of broadcasting to the school arrangements. But this tends to be more difficult in the secondary school where the form probably goes to a different master or mistress for each successive lesson, especially as the time of broadcasting rarely corresponds with the limits of an ordinary period and often cuts across them.

There remains also the fact that many of the teachers in secondary schools have spent at least three years in the intensive study of a special subject at a university, and their interest is largely concentrated on it. It is not, of course, suggested that they can in the least vie with those experts who broadcast, or that their type of training necessarily makes them more effective *teachers* than the non-specialist teacher, in whatever type of school he serves. But a live lesson given by a competent specialist is probably more effective than a broadcast in which the class perforce co-operate less freely and are more 'regimented' by the requirements of the technique. It also frequently happens that those who give educational broadcasts have written on their subject; and what they have to say is sometimes not much more than a résumé of their books. The specialist teacher has probably had time and opportunity to become familiar with these writings, and can utilise them in his own teaching.

All that has been said above does not really minimise the importance of broadcasting as an educational medium. The formal broadcast lesson, for the reasons already given, may possibly prove of greatest value in the non-specialist type of school; but, apart from these set broadcast lessons, the radio holds a unique position for providing 'background' and stimulating interest at any stage and in any school. It can

bring into the classroom an orchestral concert, the performance of a play, the dramatisation of a novel or of a historical event, a talk by an expert, an account by an eyewitness – the possibilities are almost unlimited. Every teacher will do well to explore the resources which the B.B.C. puts at his disposal, and to make the fullest use of them.

A technique which is of particular value in language teaching is the use of tape-recorders. They enable the pupil to hear himself speak and to realise his own defects of pronunciation, or a master-tape can supply material to which the pupil must make a response. In a fully equipped 'language laboratory' the pupils sit in separate 'booths' and wear headphones, while the master-tape is played at a central console under the control of the teacher. There are various methods of applying these techniques, as in the case of teaching machines (see below); but a good deal of explanatory literature is available, and the Audio-Visual Language Association exists to help teachers who are interested.

Much interest has also been aroused in recent years by the introduction and use of programmed learning and teaching machines. They originated in the United States, but already a good deal of research on this topic has been done in British universities. The subject-matter of instruction, or 'programme', is broken up into stages called 'frames'; and each frame not only presents material, but it also requires some definite response from the learner. The teaching machine is a device for presenting the programme, and there are on the market many different types of machine, some comparatively simple or even in a kind of book form, and others complicated and expensive. Like the monitorial system these methods impart instruction by mechanical means, and they thus provide an attempt to cope with the shortage of

teachers. A large number of books are now available – as in the case of audio-visual aids – explaining how the system works and how automation in teaching may be achieved. It must be remembered that programmed learning deals with the imparting and checking of information – and that is only part of the teacher's job. Education is essentially a matter of living interaction between mind and mind; and the example and personality of the teacher are at least as important as the amount of sheer information or intellectual exercise which he is capable of giving to his pupils. But if programmed learning, in this age of large classes and staff shortages, can set the teacher free to devote more of his time to *educating*, then perhaps it may justify itself. As an authority on the subject has said, 'If the common topics in a course could be supplied to students *via* machines, and common difficulties dealt with, then specific and interesting topics might be discussed in some semblance of tutorials.'¹ This applies whether in schools of different types, or with students, or in industrial and military training.

For further reading

- J. Adams, *Exposition and Illustration in Teaching*, chapters x to xvii.
 P. B. Ballard, *The Changing School*, chapter xvii.
 H. C. McKown and A. B. Roberts, *Audio-visual Aids to Instruction*.
 A Buchanan, *The Film on Education*.
 T. L. Green, *Making and Using Film Strips*.
 W. L. Sumner, *Visual Methods in Education*.
 Publications of the Educational Foundation for Visual Aids, 33,
 Queen Anne Street, London, W.1.
Visual Education (monthly).
 W. W. Johnson, *The Gramophone in Education*.
 J. B. Hilton, *The Language Laboratory in School*.

¹ K. Austwick, *Teaching Machines and Programming*, p. 201.

ILLUSTRATION AND APPARATUS

- J. B. Adam and A. J. Shawcross, *The Language Laboratory*.
J. D. Turner, *Introduction to the Language Laboratory*.
R. Palmer, *School Broadcasting in Britain*.
K. Methold, *Broadcasting with Children*.
A. T. Himmelweit, *Television and the Child*.
K. Austwick, *Teaching Machines and Programming*.
J. L. Lysaught and C. M. Williams, *A Guide to Programmed Instruction*.
W. I. Smith and J. W. Moore, *Programmed Learning: Theory and Research*.
Programmed Learning (three issues a year).
Ministry of Education (Pamphlet, No. 20), *School Broadcasts*.
Year Book of Education for 1960. *Communication Media and the School*.
Publications of the School Broadcasting Council for the United Kingdom, 3, Portland Place, London, W.1.
Programmes from the Schools, Information Office, Associated-Rediffusion, Television House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.
Publications of the Audio-Visual Language Association; secretary, 53, Kensington Gardens, Cranbrook, Ilford, Essex.

CHAPTER 15

Mark systems, prizes and reports¹

In discussing mark systems we have in mind only marks which are given for work, and not those awarded for conduct – as, for example, the ‘order marks’ which are not uncommon in girls’ schools. Mark systems are bound up with the correction of work and the valuing of it; and for this reason – as in the case of examinations – there tends always to be an element of unreliability, owing to the personal factor of the teacher who awards the marks. But, leaving this point out of account, some way of valuing work is needed, if only for assessing a pupil’s class contribution to his ‘House’s’ score in an inter-house competition. Normally, however, such marks are used in order to value the work-achievement of pupils who are in competition with one another. Their purpose is to stimulate emulation by means of form-orders, taking places, etc. Emulation in its highest form is a desire to imitate the good and excel in it; but it can degenerate into rivalry, which seeks to deprive others of what they have gained. Thus it may even foster dishonesty. For these reasons emulation has sometimes been decried on educational grounds. Its chief exponents were perhaps the Jesuits, who, after all, were some of the most successful schoolmasters in

¹ In compiling this chapter some use has been made of an article contributed by the present writer to the *Times Educational Supplement* of July 18th, 1942. It has been reproduced here by kind permission of the Editor.

the whole history of our craft. In order to stimulate *honestæ emulatio* they divided their classes into groups of ten pupils apiece, and these were called *decuriæ*. There was one group of *decuriæ* of the East, and one of the West. When a boy in a *decuria* of the East was called upon to say his lesson, his 'opposite number' (*æmulus*) in the other group stood up, and, if he could, corrected any mistakes. Then he in turn had to answer, and the process was reversed. The Port-Royalists, on the other hand, were said to discourage emulation.¹ Perhaps the wise schoolmaster will not altogether abandon a practice which may encourage his pupils to greater effort; but he will be well aware of the possible dangers that are involved.

The question of prizes for work is closely related to the problem of marks and the use of emulation. Life is certainly full of prizes, and if the school is a microcosm, it might be argued that prizes are not out of place there. As St. Paul said, many run a race but only one receives the prize. But in a school the winning of it may involve a good deal of chance or luck. If the top boy in the class obtains a terminal total of 2149 marks he is awarded the form-prize; but the runner-up, whose figure is 2142, gets nothing. The awarding of prizes also suggests a compensation for doing something unpleasant. The top boy has probably derived most pleasure from his school work, however hard he has striven. It might be more logical to give the prize as a consolation to the less-gifted, bored bonehead at the bottom of the class. A similar criticism might be made of the practice of granting a holiday as a reward for good work. A boy normally does this because he realises the value of it and gets pleasure from it; and his reward is a respite from it; whereas, if a pupil sees no pur-

¹ This contention is probably somewhat ill-founded. See H. C. Barnard, *The Little Schools of Port-Royal*, pp. 103-6.

pose in his work and dislikes it, he is kept in and made to do more of it! It is worth while to think out an answer to this criticism.

Any practising teacher will be compelled to use the mark and prize system which happens to be in vogue in the school where he serves. A mark system is handy and simple to work, just because it is mechanical. But if at all elaborate it may throw a heavy burden on the teacher, and it may even exercise a tyranny on the class and encourage a wrong outlook on school work. At a well-known school in the north of England, where the writer once served, it was not unknown for boys to bargain for marks – *e.g.* ‘Please, Sir; you gave me 15 for my essay last week, but only 13 this week. Don’t you think that this one is as good as that?’ A mark system may indeed encourage overstrain in the conscientious pupil, and cheating in the less conscientious; while the more care-free do not worry about it, so that it influences them relatively little either for good or evil – and is in so far useless.

If, in view of what has been said, it is felt that a competitive mark system is undesirable, what can take its place? Perhaps a three-point scale for assessing achievement and application is as good a device as any. The school’s opinion of the quality of the work actually done by the pupil may be estimated in three grades: A, B, C; while its views as to the effort actually put forth in the process may be indicated by the figures: 1, 2, 3. This gives an assessment of the pupil’s work and of its value in a manner easily understood both by him and by his parents; but no comparison between individual pupils is implied. A boy who is assessed A₁ may have hard work to keep his assessment. A pupil assessed C₂ has to work hard to improve it; if he can turn his 2 into 1, the C may become a B. Assessments like C₁ and A₃ suggest that the school has wrongly graded the pupil concerned, and

that some steps should be taken to rectify this situation if it persists. A scheme of this kind gives a better picture 'absolutely' of a pupil's performance and powers, than does an ordinary mark system. For example, if a boy in a Certificate form is given B₁ for chemistry at the end of the first term of the year, this is an indication that he will have a good chance of passing in the examination. But if he is assessed as 12th in the form, one can make no estimate of his chances, because one has no idea of the general level of work in this particular form. Of course, an assessment system of this kind rules out a scheme of form prizes; although a few special competitive awards might still be retained – e.g. for reading, singing, the best contribution to the school magazine; or for an upper, or lower, school general knowledge test. Perhaps the best way of rewarding good work is not by prizes or marks, or even assessments, but by a few words of praise or appreciation – used not too frequently or lavishly, but judiciously and on the right occasion.¹ One should never omit to thank a pupil who makes a really thoughtful answer or contributes a good point to the lesson.

Reports can be of two kinds. First come the confidential statements furnished to the head by a form master or house master in reference to pupils for whom he is specially responsible. Such summaries should be as full and as fair as they can be made. It will be well if the teacher concerned, in drawing up his report, can consult with those of his colleagues who also take the pupil. The private record, to which reference has already been made,² will prove of the greatest value when the document is being drafted. Here, for example, is such a report:

¹ Cf. R. Ascham, *The Scholemaster*: 'There is no such whetstone to sharpen a good wit, and encourage a will to learning, as is praise.'

² See *supra*, p. 63.

[REPORT AT END OF SUMMER TERM, 19..]

SMITH, J. E. (IIIb); 12.II. on 30.vii.19..

Steady progress in all subjects throughout year, though he still dislikes Latin and finds it difficult. Eye treatment (started wearing spectacles Jan. 19..) has obviously proved beneficial. His association with Brown, R., has not proved very beneficial to either – they tend to waste each other's time; but both settled down to some extent last term. He is certainly growing more responsible, especially since he swam regularly in the Junior Swimming Team (Summer Term 19..). He has started violin lessons privately (one lesson a week since March 19..), and is hoping to join the Junior School Orchestra next year.

The other type of report is that which is sent to parents, and this is the kind which is more familiar. It seems that the French Oratorians – a teaching order which became prominent in the eighteenth century – were the first schoolmasters to make a regular practice of sending home a terminal report on the work and progress of their pupils.¹ Since then the custom has spread far and wide, especially in secondary schools. It is comparatively easy to record the form order, percentage, average for the form, etc.—according to the particular scheme which is the standard practice of the school concerned. The real difficulty arises in filling satisfactorily the column headed *Remarks*. A colleague of the writer's used to say that boys could be divided into two classes – those who were 'trying', and those who were 'very trying'; and that all that one needed at the end of term was two rubber stamps. But, to be serious, it is a professional duty not to take this attitude. The *Remarks* column should always say something definite. Vague and conventional phrases like 'v.f.' or 'satis.' should never appear. The writer was once shown a report on which the word 'good' was entered against

¹ See H. C. Barnard, *The French Tradition in Education*, p. 171.

each of the eleven subjects taken. At the bottom, under the heading *Headmistress's Remarks*, appeared the words: 'A good report.'

At the same time, some discretion must be used in one's attempts to be explicit. It is sometimes tempting, but at all costs to be avoided, to use the *Remarks* column to abuse an unsatisfactory pupil. There are stories about the schoolmaster who gets a slap at both sides: *e.g.* 'Utterly stupid; would make a good parent.' An entry like 'Never works', or 'Too idle to make progress', may provoke an inquiry as to what the schoolmaster is paid to do. So far as possible the remarks should be encouraging. If something unpleasant has to be said (and it should never be shirked), it should be put first. There is a definite difference between: 'He showed some improvement towards the end of the term, but his work on the whole has not been very good', and: 'His work on the whole has not been very good, but he showed some improvement towards the end of the term'.

Finally, it should be remembered that the *Remarks* column of a report is not an appropriate place to show one's powers as a humorist. A colleague of the writer's once wrote of a pupil: 'Dodo-like in his inane fatuity.' We were grateful for this expression of what we all felt to be profoundly true; but the epigram was quite correctly censored by the school authorities. In short, the ideal remark should combine justice, mercy and encouragement. It should never be written without due reflection. To judge from the writer's experience as a headmaster, parents take school-reports far more seriously than they are sometimes supposed to do.¹ That being so, it is the schoolmaster's duty to be as careful

¹ And so, apparently, do pupils. Refer to *A Survey of Rewards and Punishments in Schools* (National Foundation for Educational Research), pp. 209-10, and p. 220.

in phrasing a report as is the physician's when writing a prescription.

For further reading

Terry Thomas, *The Science of Marking*.

D. M. McIntosh, D. A. Walker, and D. Mackay, *The Scaling of Teachers' Marks and Estimates*.

CHAPTER 16

Class-management. The technique of questioning. The correction of written work

As we saw in Chapter 13, there has arisen a tendency to question the value of a rigid grouping of pupils inside a system of classes. But if such a system is partly, or even wholly, abandoned, what would be the function of the teacher? In any case, does his position with regard to his pupils need reconsideration? We have certainly given up regarding him as a slave-driver goading an unwilling gang to their task of learning Latin – a situation summed up in the old tag: '*Qui, quæ, quod*. Fetch me the rod.' No longer do we envisage him as a drill-sergeant putting his squad through a rigidly-prescribed set of exercises, which permit of no individual variation whatever. Nor is he a foreman assigning work to a number of 'hands', and seeing that they can perform their mechanical duties effectively – the ideal behind the monitorial system. Again, the school teacher is not simply a knowledge-purveyor filling up a number of vacant minds, like the instructor in a technical college, or a coach for a correspondence course. Nor is he like a machine-minder in a factory. He may not even be simply a gardener tending young plants, as Froebel would have us think; nor someone who arranges the pupils' environment so that they

may react to it in the most profitable and desirable way – the Herbartian view.

The fact is that – as he has already been shown – teaching is not *one* sort of job; it involves many types of activity if it is to be really good teaching. Even if, therefore, we retain the class as the unit of school organisation – and there seems no good reason for abandoning this practice – the school-master's duty in regard to it as something more than just formal teaching. Adams suggests that the relationship should be described by calling him a 'class-director'.¹ Even in the most 'advanced' and 'progressive' schools the life of the community goes on in a selected environment; and it is the teachers who do the selecting. Even Montessori prescribes her apparatus, and Caldwell Cook controls the material on which his 'littlemen' base their activities. But the teacher's function is not ended when he has supplied the environment for the class or group, for which he is responsible. Even if he is not actually teaching, he is 'standing by', ready to help or advise or intervene, if necessary. As Sir Percy Nunn says, 'He will be an "idea-carrier" between the great world and the school microcosm, infecting his pupils imperceptibly with germs that may fructify into ideals of sound workmanship and devoted labour.'² And quite apart from these intellectual activities, and more important than any of them, the teacher is there to regulate the moral atmosphere of his class, not so much by precept or punishment, as by suggestion and personal example.

Having said this we are perhaps justified in considering the general conditions under which this teacher-class relationship may most efficiently be realised in the everyday life

¹ See J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, chap. VI.

² T. P. Nunn, *Education: Its Data and First Principles* (revised edition, 1945), p. 108.

of the ordinary school. To begin with, it is wise to ensure healthy conditions in the classroom. The air must be fresh and the ventilation effective, but not draughty. There should be a complete flush through at the end of every period and during an interval; it will be the duty of a window-monitor to see to this. The temperature also should be as comfortable as fuel-cuts and ineffective heating-systems allow; the ideal is a room that is not too hot nor too cold, and in which there are no great variations of temperature. The lighting should be adequate and should fall on pupil's desks from the left. It is the teacher's business to know which members of the form tend to be short-sighted or defective in hearing. Such cases should, of course, invariably be reported to the head, and dealt with by the school doctor; but meanwhile children suffering from these handicaps should be allowed to sit as near to the front of the class as possible. Pupils should never be permitted to sit in wet clothes. It is customary in girls' schools for the pupils to change their outdoor shoes, and there seems no good reason why boys should not adopt so sensible and hygienic a practice. The teacher should keep a careful eye on the posture of his pupils in form. They should never be allowed to lounge or tip up chairs or shuffle desks. Yet it is important that they should not be uncomfortable. Let them change their attitude from time to time; they may perhaps stand for a little while or move about, as an alternative to sitting still. Hands folded on desks, or arms clasped behind backs in a constrained way, is not a desirable practice – except perhaps just possibly for a few minutes in order to settle down a large and restless form.

So far we have considered the pupils; but much depends also on the teacher. It is most important that he should consistently maintain the right attitude to his work. He should see that the classroom is kept tidy and is a pleasant

place in which to live. Teachers offend against this precept quite as frequently as pupils. How often does one see a messy demonstration bench in the laboratory, or a master's desk piled with books and papers in disorder – or, worse still, a chalky duster flung down upon it. Scavengers or litter monitors should be appointed to take turns in periodically clearing up the classroom, and the making of litter should be regarded as a school offence. But it is the teacher who should set the example in these matters. It will help also to have monitors whose duty it is to distribute and collect answer-slips, books or apparatus.

Again, the teacher should himself demonstrate the virtue of punctuality. If possible he should be in the classroom *before* the children arrive, and it is his duty to see that the pupils are punctual too. They should be assigned definite places in the form-room. It is helpful, especially when one is learning the names of a new form, to have a key showing the name of each pupil and the position in which he sits. If one is taking a class which one has never seen before and is never likely to take again, it may be advisable to get the children to number off, and in the course of the lesson to address them by their numbers rather than by their names. Pupils should never be allowed to sit just where they please or change their places from one lesson to another, unless the teacher sanctions this. When the form is dismissed its members should go out quickly and in a prescribed order, and not in an unruly mass. The teacher should also set an example in his (or her) own appearance and attitude. Schoolmasters, in particular, are prone to lounge, or sit on their desks, or keep their hands in their pockets; but it is unfair to do anything which we should reprimand in our pupils. Finally, the teacher should organise his time carefully. The books and apparatus that he will need should be

in readiness before the lesson begins. If paper-slips for tests are to be used, have a stock of them in hand and do not tear them up in the course of the lesson.

We proceed to deal with the technique of questioning. A teaching question, as a piece of method in the giving of a lesson, is something different from an examination question which is used for testing a pupil's knowledge. The distinction is sometimes blurred in practice when children are allowed to answer out of turn. The teacher puts a certain question to a certain pupil for a certain definite purpose. He does not simply want information, but he aims at a specific development in the structure of the lesson; and the whole effect is spoiled if some bright youth chips in with the answer, and so deprives the pupil, to whom it was intentionally directed, of the opportunity to think things out. In practice both the teaching and examination type of question will be used in the course of the lesson. At the Preparation stage, for example, we shall use test questions in order to ascertain what knowledge the class already possesses; in the Application and at the end we may also, by the help of such questions, estimate how far the material of the lesson has been apperceptively assimilated. But at the Presentation and Formulation stages we shall be chiefly concerned with the teaching question; and it is this type which gives the beginner the greatest difficulty, and about which he needs most advice.

In the first place, then, a question must be clear; it should be couched in such a way that every member of the class can understand it. The writer recently heard a history lesson given by a student to a first-year class in a secondary modern school. He frequently used terms like 'function' and 'political outlook'. The young teacher – and particularly the specialist university graduate – must make every effort to 'get down'

to the pupils. If your question obviously puzzles the class, or some of its members, recast it more simply and try again. If you cannot obtain the teaching result, for which you had hoped, by means of one question, try another, the answer to which may be simpler and make the case clearer; then go back to the original question.

A teaching question must also be put in such a way that it will bring the answer (or one of the answers, if several are possible) that the teacher wants. It must be the right question if it is to obtain the right answer; and any kind of vagueness or ambiguity is fatal. Moreover, the interest of the whole class must be maintained. The teaching question in the first instance is addressed to all of them, and it is intended that everybody should start thinking about it, even if an individual member is eventually selected to give the answer. For this reason the question itself should always be put first, so as to awaken general interest; and then can be added the name of the pupil who is to give the answer, so that the question becomes individualised. It is well to keep one's eye on the rest of the form while one child is answering. Never allow the answer to drag on too long, after the interest of the remainder of the class has begun to flag. This is especially liable to happen in the case of younger children.

For the purpose of preserving order it is necessary to have a prescribed scheme for answering. The pupil must first put up his hand and obtain permission to answer, if the question has not already been put to him directly. There must on no account be any unauthorised answering, and, still less, forests of hands waving and children standing up and calling 'Please, Sir!' If that situation arises, the teacher should say quietly 'Hands down', and explain that pupils must remain seated and be quiet before permission will be given. Once this technique is understood by the form, and

if the teacher keeps to it consistently, this particular difficulty will no longer arise. Again, two or more pupils should never be allowed to answer together; this is a common fault with students and with young teachers. Nor should leading questions ever be given. It is childish, for example, to suggest the first letter of a word required. Do not allow a few of the brightest pupils to do all the answering. The whole form should contribute to the building up of the lesson, and the skilful teacher will ply the duller or backward pupils with easier questions, if this is necessary. If they take their part together with other abler children, they will gain in confidence and self-respect, and in the enjoyment of their school-work. In any case, full use should be made by the teacher of the answers which the pupils give to his questioning; these should be built into the structure of the lesson and form an integral part of its method. Pupils should also be encouraged to ask for information, and for an explanation of points not understood; but the teacher should beware of being side-tracked. If there is any suspicion of this being the case, one can tell the inquirer to come back at the end of afternoon school, when the matter will be fully explained to him. This will not deter the earnest seeker after the truth, but it will discourage the potential time-waster.

As far as possible a class should be trained to correct its own work; but this can be done only to a limited extent. It is possible in the case of the simplest answers – *e.g.* in spelling, mental arithmetic, or questions in history or geography or languages where an exact expression in one or two words only is required. The children may be allowed to exchange answer-slips and mark each other's papers. In order to avoid possible occasions of stumbling it may be advisable to divide the form into A and B groups, so that As and Bs sit alternately. Then have two sets of questions of

approximately the same type and difficulty; and let each pair of pupils exchange and mark. In any case the teacher should always collect the slips and check them from time to time (it is not necessary to do so on every occasion). It should be remembered that incorrect marking is not always a sign of dishonesty or collusion. Children often make genuine mistakes; and perhaps we tend to expect too much of them in requiring them to aid us in marking tests of this kind. The teacher may be able to take the opportunity of going round the class while it is engaged on written work, in order to correct an exercise and discuss mistakes with individual pupils. More complicated work – *e.g.* essays, problems in mathematics or science, proses or translations, answers in history or geography – must be corrected by the teacher and will probably be taken home. But it is a mistake to be over-conscientious – this warning applies particularly to women teachers. There is no virtue *per se* in red ink emendations, if the pupil takes little or no notice of them. As Findlay very appositely remarks, ‘That correction is only valid, only real correction, where the error is set right *by the pupil*. I may diligently blue-pencil his error in a sum; have I corrected him?’¹

This being so, the teacher must never be content with simply correcting work and then handing it back. Wherever possible one should go through errors with each pupil individually, and he should be made to correct his own mistakes on this basis. It often speeds up the process if one has a set of code signs. For example in the correction of an essay a straight line under a word may indicate a spelling mistake, and a wavy line faulty grammar or syntax. Ordinary printer’s proof signs are useful; *e.g.* \wedge 5] n.p. or ¶. The symbols should be standardised (if possible throughout the

¹ J. J. Findlay, *The Foundations of Education*, Vol. II, p. 119.

school) and should be clearly understood alike by the teacher and by the pupils. If necessary, they can be written on the inside cover of the exercise book. In translation work into a foreign language it is a good plan to have a fair copy made of sentences which contain bad mistakes of grammar or syntax. The exercise should be written on right-hand pages only, with alternate blank lines for the teacher's directions or comments; in that case the opposite blank left-hand page is available for the pupil's fair copy after he has seen the mistakes indicated and the category into which they fall. Perhaps it is not always necessary to mark every mistake. It may occasionally be advisable to concentrate for a time on some particular form of error – *e.g.* on spelling only with younger children, or on a particular grammatical construction (*e.g.* conditional sentences) in a foreign language with older ones. When this weakness has improved, one can return to deal with other types of mistake. It is always wise to correct work as soon as possible after it has been done, and not leave time for the pupil to forget all about it. For this reason, marking during the period, either by using the blackboard or by going round to individual pupils or by calling them up to the teacher's desk, is often the most effective method.

For further reading

- J. H. Panton, *Modern Teaching Practice and Technique*.
 W. T. Davies and T. B. Shepherd, *Teaching: Begin Here*.
 M. Sturt and E. C. Oakden, *Matter and Method in Education*.
 F. M. Austin, *The Art of Questioning in the Classroom*.
 J. Adams, *Errors in School*.

CHAPTER 17

The theory and practice of discipline

The theory and practice of discipline brings us to one of the most important problems of the teacher-class relationship. The meaning and use of 'freedom' in education has already been discussed.¹ The whole organised life of the school should be designed so as to secure what one might call 'disciplined freedom' – *i.e.* to encourage the free development of individuality and yet to ensure that the freedom so secured is used, not selfishly, but in the service of the community. But for any kind of ordered and continuous social life some rules of conduct have to be adopted, whether formally or informally; and their sanction will be most effective when their purpose and appropriateness are recognised by all whom they concern. The school has been created by the community for a specific purpose – let us say, following Aristotle, for the fullest realisation of individuality through the life of the society; and the teacher has a duty to the community in attempting to achieve that purpose. If therefore the pupil attempts to frustrate it, the teacher's duty is not to acquiesce, but to resist, both for the sake of the pupil concerned, and also of other pupils who may suffer.

This, then, would appear to afford an authority for the exercise of 'discipline' on the part of the teacher, in order to enforce the rules of the school community; although, as we shall see, there are some educationists who do not take this

¹ See *supra*, pp. 66–68.

view. But if we *do* take it, we shall agree that, while the most effective control is that which the life of the school itself exercises, the individual teacher has also both the authority for 'keeping order', and the duty of securing it, so far as his own personal relations with his pupils are concerned. The two things are closely connected. One is less likely to have disciplinary troubles in a school where 'freedom in service' is being realised, than in one where the sense of public duty and personal responsibility is but little developed.

It is desirable, however, for a moment to consider exactly what the word 'discipline' means (or should mean) in reference to a school. Obviously the significance of the term is quite different from that which is current in military circles. The highly-placed army officer, who is sometimes entrusted with the speech on prize-day, is not unnaturally inclined to praise the 'discipline' which the individual gains by belonging to the cadet corps, or by being conscripted. But the capacity to perform evolutions in perfect order at the word of command, or to exhibit what inspecting officers appreciatively call 'smartness', is by no means what we should desire from schoolchildren. Discipline in school ultimately means self-discipline – the capacity for self-control. Obedience to command and recognition of authority are, in the writer's opinion, essential to the right teacher-pupil relationship; but the *aim* of the schoolmaster's discipline is to render the pupil independent of the word of command, and enable him to become someone who can be trusted to do the right and sensible and decent thing entirely on his own responsibility. It may be questioned whether a military training ensures this. When Dr. C. E. Raven in 1949 relinquished the Vice-Chancellorship of Cambridge, he is reported to have said that in the University as a whole there were some 200 young men who had better not be there, who seemed

to be vicious and ill-disciplined, and responsible for hooliganism. 'They were nearly all,' he added, 'in the army of occupation in Germany in the first two years after the war.'¹ Yet if the discipline of an army training really meant that those who had undergone it for two years had a greater capacity for self-control than those who had not had this experience, this situation could not have arisen; it would have been the ex-service undergraduates who set the example of 'discipline'. It is clear, therefore, that as teachers we cannot be content with a disciplinary system of the military type; whatever methods we may have to use, we must always aim at something beyond this and quite different from it.

Having made this point clear, we should do well to make equally clear that, for the reasons stated in the first part of this chapter, classroom disorder is not to be tolerated, because sensible and satisfactory work is not possible under such conditions. It has been said that a schoolmaster's 'discipline' – like Caesar's wife's virtue – should be 'above suspicion'. But there is nothing disgraceful to him if he has difficulties with a class, so long as he meets them with courage, persistence and intelligence, with patience and a sense of humour; and can thus convert a system of control by the teacher into one of self-control by the pupils. There are many teachers who never have troubles of this kind; and whatever they did, no disorder would result. It sometimes happens also that other teachers always tend to have trouble; and this goes on from year to year in the school, so that it becomes traditional. It is customary to rag X, and never to think of ragging Y. The tragedy is that X finds it impossible to give up teaching, and enter a more suitable and congenial occupation. It is therefore important, when

¹ See *The Times* of October 31st, 1949.

one is appointed to the staff of a school, to establish the right disciplinary tradition from the first; if one can get into the Y category one need have few, if any, further thoughts about 'keeping discipline'; but otherwise it may prove increasingly difficult to live down a reputation for weakness in this respect. All the same, if one does make a bad job of one's first post it may be quite possible to move to another one and there profit by previous experience and have no further trouble.

The capacity to secure classroom discipline is ultimately a matter of personality, and there is no golden rule for ensuring it. It is obvious also that some classes are much easy to control than others. But, with these provisos, the following advice may be offered to those who are having to face these problems for the first time. It is always important to remember that if children want to learn they will not be disorderly. Once their interest and imagination are captured, the rest is easy. If therefore one can learn to teach really well, the pupils will never get out of hand. The moral is that one should try to become as good a craftsman as possible, and acquire as much experience as one can – and not all of it with 'easy' forms – during the course of training, and before starting the first job. It will help, too, to get to know the pupils' names as thoroughly and as quickly as one can. Have their names pat from the start; if necessary use a 'key'.¹ Become familiar, if you can, with their characters, home conditions, interests, handicaps. It is a great advantage to be in touch with them out of school in societies and clubs, especially in games. Often the rowdies with whom one has had trouble in class turn out to be good fellows when one gets to know them thus. It may be well, also to put as much responsibility as seems wise on members of the form. There

¹ See *supra*, p. 146.

should be various monitorial duties, as has already been indicated, and everyone should have a turn at these.

The teacher should maintain a friendly attitude to his pupils; but it is unwise to be too chatty or 'big-brotherly' – especially at first. The teacher, even in the most 'advanced' establishments, is still the teacher, and he can never really put himself on the level of his pupils. Attempts to do this will not help 'discipline', and are not really appreciated by the form. So it is advisable to be a little inscrutable for a while at the start. Gradually you will win the confidence of your pupils without losing their respect; and then it is possible to be friendly and open on both sides without fear of abuse. That situation is one of the most delightful of experiences, and it is the schoolmaster's great reward. It is helpful to be careful about the classroom rules which were suggested in the last chapter. If one is punctual, for example, it will not be necessary to spend the first few minutes of a period in calming down a class which has got out of hand during the teacher's absence. Above all things, it is important not to be slack. Any incipient disorder must be checked *at once*. If the teacher has given an order, whatever it is, he should see that it is obeyed. Never allow your pupils to argue with you or try to make terms with you.

The teacher, as far as possible, should maintain a judicial and impersonal attitude in facing this problem of class-control. It is most unwise to lose one's temper; this may have a momentary effect, but in the long run the situation will be worsened. If one has to deal with disorder this should be done pleasantly, even if one has to be firm. Never try to shelve your difficulty by standing an offender outside the classroom door in the corridor. This is a stupid practice; it does not solve the problem, it deprives the culprit of the instruction which you ought to be giving in the lesson, and

it affords him a greater opportunity than ever of wasting time. Again, be scrupulously fair – this is of the very first importance. All offenders should be treated on the same terms, so that every pupil knows where he stands. There must on no account whatever be any breath of favouritism. The teacher should try to maintain a consistent attitude towards this problem of class-control, whatever the conditions may be – however tired he is and whatever the state of his health, whether it is the first period on Monday morning or the last period on Friday afternoon.

If the form is getting a little restless or out of hand, it may help if a change of work is given; for example, a written exercise may be set instead of oral work. Never let two *mauvais sujets* sit next to each other. It has already been said that every member of the class should have a prescribed seat. In making out the order the teacher should be careful to separate undesirables and to put a well-behaved pupil next to a rowdy one. It is advisable to keep doubtful characters towards the front of the class, well under the teacher's eye – and he should keep that eye open. But there is no need continually to stand in front, or to sit at one's desk. Do not hesitate to walk about the room from time to time while you are teaching, or even to wait at the back, behind the class, especially while writing work is being done.

If it is necessary to punish a pupil, it will be wise to do this yourself, rather than to make use of the machinery which the school provides – *e.g.* detention, order marks, etc. These devices mean that other members of the staff, or the head, may have to enforce penalties for disorder, for which you yourself are responsible; and it is the weakest teachers who put most duties of this kind on to their colleagues. Such a situation is not fair, especially to those who never use the school system, or never need to give punishments for disorder,

and yet have to do their share of 'detention duty' – or whatever it may be. So do your own 'keeping in'; and this applies especially to detention of pupils for unsatisfactory work, when the teacher who set it should be at hand to give any necessary help or advice. If, however, you find yourself landed in a piece of really bad disorder, it may be necessary to report a pupil to the head. The writer once, when walking round the school of which he was in charge, heard one of his colleagues in a classroom exclaim in a loud and angry voice: 'You little ruffian, you aren't fit for decent society! Go straight to the Headmaster's study!' The head of course is a busy person and will not really want to be bothered with the disciplinary problems of the staff; but they are part of his responsibility, and in any case he will normally be anxious to help a beginner. But this reference of your problems to the head should be reserved for really serious offences – *e.g.* deliberate cheating. At the same time, if you are having difficulty – perhaps with one particular form – and are young at the job, you can quite well go to the head and tell him how things are, and ask his advice and help. Usually you will find him sympathetic; but ultimately you will have to solve your problem for yourself.

For further reading

P. B. Ballard, *The Changing School*, chapters I–VII.

Ministry of Education, *Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers*, §§ 28–34.

CHAPTER 18

Punishments

The popular caricature of the schoolmaster represents him as a man wearing a mortar-board and carrying a cane. As the result of a lamentable tradition in Western education the school has been associated with punishments – especially corporal punishment. In spite of the great advance in educational theory and practice during recent times the old tradition is not yet quite dead. But punishments in school should never be regarded as a normal procedure; they should be exceptional measures which have to be taken when the machine has got out of gear. The better a teacher is, the less he punishes. The best teachers never need to give penalties for disorder, and reserve them for unsatisfactory work. In such schools as Eton in the days of Keate, or in the monitorial schools, or in the payment-by-results ‘elementary’ schools, the conditions were such that one could hardly ‘maintain discipline’ except through fear of punishment. But in the school of today a different attitude exists. Punishment, of course, is to be regarded as remedial, and not retributive; and that means that, before we resort to it, we must be quite sure that we have diagnosed the case aright, and that the proposed penalty is really indicated. The corollary of this is that one should never administer punishment in a hurry or in a temper. No punishment should ever be given without the culprit understanding fully why he is punished. One weakness of the detention system is that a

penalty doled out for an offence committed on Monday may not be worked off till Friday; and there are plenty of light-hearted, short-memored ruffians who quite honestly have forgotten by the end of the week what 'Old So and so' put them in for at the beginning of it – especially if meanwhile they have collected two or three other penalties.

We are often told that the punishment should fit the crime. This need not mean that we subscribe to the doctrine of natural consequences, put forward by Rousseau and Herbert Spencer.¹ But there are cases in which the principle can be in some measure adopted. If a pupil arrives late he may be required to make up the time after school; if he runs in the corridor he may be sent back and made to walk; if he breaks a window he may have to pay (out of his pocket-money and not from parental sources) to have it repaired; if his homework is not done properly, he may have to repeat it on a half-holiday. When Thring found a boy cutting his initials on the desk, he sent him to the handicraft room and made him carve them on the hardest piece of wood that could be found there.² But this type of penalty is not often possible, and one usually has to resort to something artificial and not strictly relevant – and therefore not so satisfactory. What can be done?

In the old days the usual device was to set 'lines' – copying out a passage from the *Aeneid*, or writing one hundred times 'I must not waste my time'. One can hardly conceive a more stupid and mechanical business, or one more likely to spoil handwriting or kill any interest in the works of Virgil. The school, of course, may have some official system of its own – a scheme of detentions, or of 'order marks' which add up to

¹ See H. C. Barnard, *A History of English Education from 1760*, p. 164.

² There is an amusing example of a punishment which fits the crime in Ian Hay, *The Lighter Side of School Life*, pp. 143-4.

a visit to the head; but, for reasons already given, it is preferable not to rely on this. The writer, when a headmaster, used to find a 'weekly report' system quite effective. Any form master or subject master who found a pupil's work or conduct unsatisfactory could put him on weekly report. This meant that every Saturday morning the culprit had to obtain from the school secretary a special form and take it round to every master who taught him. Each of them made an entry under the three headings: Classwork, Homework, Conduct. The housemaster also made an entry, and then the boy brought the report to the headmaster, and a discussion took place. Boys disliked being on a weekly report, and were very eager to be taken off; and one could usually do this after a week or two, though it was never allowed until a boy could show a perfectly clean sheet. Perhaps the efficacy of such a system depends ultimately on how the head deals with it; but the writer did not as a rule punish boys on the basis of a weekly report, though it did often lead to considerable investigation; and sometimes extra work was set out of school hours to make up for what had been scamped.

If a school punishment system includes the holding of detentions, the problem of how the pupils are to be occupied still remains. At one famous school, in which the writer served as an assistant master, there was a system of punishment drill. Squads of offenders slowly raised and lowered barbells in the gymnasium, under the command of a sergeant instructor. Such a practice savours of cruelty and bears more heavily on the weaker brethren than on the more robust. It also cuts across the interest of the physical education lesson. Is one to set extra sums? But this associates punishment with arithmetic – and it also encourages the 'faking' of calculations, unless the teacher in charge carefully checks all the results. Are the culprits to be given copy-books to fill up?

But that tends to spoil their handwriting. Are they to be marshalled in lines and made to stand perfectly still for, say, five or ten minutes? But that reacts very differently on individuals according to their physical and psychological make-up. It must be confessed that there is considerable difficulty in devising a really satisfactory detention scheme. Perhaps offenders could be set to pick stones off the school field or count text-books for a stock-taking; but there will probably not be enough work of this kind to go round, and it ought properly to be undertaken as a voluntary service to the school. If order marks are given, the house system may help; because disciplinary offences can then be counted against the culprit's house total, and it is just possible that the public opinion exerted against him may have more influence in inducing him to mend his ways than an actual punishment. But one cannot take these things for granted. The ineffectiveness of many of these punishment schemes is shown by the fact that certain members of a school tend regularly, week by week, to collect a quota of detentions or order marks, and never seem to make an improvement. It is obviously useless to continue such treatment in cases like this.

One definite piece of advice can, however, be given. Never set a collective punishment to a whole form if an individual culprit does not confess. It is rarely, if ever justified, and those who suffer unfairly (and, even more, their parents) will resent it. If an offender does not own up, it would be better to leave the matter, rather than to punish the innocent with the guilty – though the form should have this point of view and the reason for the teacher's action made clear to them. If these considerations are properly explained, and if there has been some corporate responsibility, the pupils will often volunteer to make amends *en bloc* – e.g. by having a levy to pay for a broken classroom window.

More serious offences, such as direct disobedience or wilful bad manners, should be carefully investigated. The offender should be interviewed privately, and the matter discussed. The teacher tends to view these offences too much from the adult point of view; but it is better to appeal to the pupil's common sense than to his conscience, and to explain exactly why we take exception to his conduct. If disobedience was really deliberate, or if bad manners were really intentional, then the case is serious and a reference to the head may be necessary. Similar treatment is indicated in the case of cheating. Pupils may not take an adult view of this and may fail to realise its unfairness – the element of not playing the game in respect to one's fellows. This fact should be pointed out, and it should be made clear that the practice must stop immediately. If it does happen again after this warning, moral indignation may be used effectively and drastic action taken. Lying, again, may be due simply to a vivid imagination – especially in the case of younger children; but it may also be used to gain an unfair advantage, or to evade a difficulty or a liability. It is most important to investigate what lies behind any case of lying. Pupils should be made to recognise the deep distinction which exists between what are just breaches of school rules and what is cowardly or dishonourable. The difference is not always made sufficiently plain. The writer knows of a case where a headmistress attempted to expel a girl who had been seen eating a cream-bun in public, while she was wearing the school uniform. Really foul things may happen in a school; but even with regard to them we may tend too much to take the adult standpoint or to judge them by standards to which we at least subscribe. But the writer's experience, particularly as a headmaster, leads him to feel that it is best, in all serious cases, to talk matters over privately with the offender and

hear what he has to say, and to make him see *why* we object to his conduct; and to warn him that the school, so long as he remains in it, will not tolerate these things from one of its members. It may be helpful to deal with such cases by means of a small committee, composed – let us say – of the headmaster, the second master or the offender's house master, with the captain of his house and a representative of his form. But a man-to-man talk with the head is usually more effective.

It will be the head's duty, then, to deal with really serious cases. His aloof position of authority in the school community normally makes an interview with him something of an ordeal for the culprit – though much must always depend on the individual head. But he is in a judicial position, and is often able to see the rights and wrongs of a case more clearly than his colleague who reports the offender. Thus an admonishment from him may have more effect – especially if it is followed up by a weekly report and a further visit to him at the end of each week until a satisfactory record can be presented. It may, however, prove necessary for the head to write to the culprit's parent, or to get an interview with him (or her), and so secure some co-operation from the home, or at least obtain some light on home conditions and reactions. The most drastic step of all is expulsion – though, in practice, this is usually put in the form of a withdrawal; *i.e.* the parent is given the chance to remove his son from the school. Nowadays, in many types of school, such a procedure would be difficult, if not impossible; but in any case it would be a most serious step in view of the pupil's after-career; and it is tantamount to a confession of failure on the school's part. For such reasons it is most rarely indicated, though it might possibly be desirable, for the sake of the rest of the school, in the case of a really bad influence. It is usually

sufficient to put the offender on parole, and to get a written statement both from him and his parents, promising that he will mend his ways and conform to the school rules.

Many boys' schools retain some form of corporal punishment; but the use of it is – or should be – governed by quite definite rules. On no account should pupils be slapped or have their ears boxed or their hair pulled. The use of the tawse for hitting children's hands is apparently still not unknown in Scotland, where it is even applied in the case of girls; but, if so, it is a barbarous custom and quite unworthy of a nation with a great educational tradition. If one believes that, is the use of the cane (applied to the right part of the boy's anatomy) to be permitted? The arguments against such a practice are certainly strong. It is said to be a survival of mediaeval brutality, itself based on an abuse of Jewish and Roman practice. Enlightened educationists, such as Comenius, Locke, Montaigne, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and many others, have condemned it. It is stigmatised as a sadistic practice which debases the teacher who administers it. Findlay quotes Mr. Dooley in describing corporal punishment as 'th' fun iv licking some wan that can't fight back';¹ and it is probably true that the abuse of it in past days accounts largely for the teacher's lack of standing in society. Moreover, it is pointed out that practically every other civilised country in the world has given up the practice. And, finally, it does not 'let the punishment fit the crime'; and it reacts very differently on the 'tough' and on the highly-strung boy. On the other side it may be said that, if it is reserved for really serious offences, it creates a great effect and may result in prompt amendment. It gets the punishment over quickly and clears the slate completely; and for this reason some culprits, at any rate, would prefer

¹ J. J. Findlay, *The Foundations of Education*, Vol. II, p. 219.

it to a long-drawn-out punishment. If it is administered only by the headmaster, and after a full, careful and judicial investigation of the crime, it may be argued that the head may be trusted to judge when corporal punishment is indicated, and not to inflict it on nervous subjects. In view of these conflicting opinions every one will have to form his own opinion on this much debated and debatable point.

The development of child-study and the spread of humanitarian views have made many people uneasy about the extent to which punishments have been used as techniques in the education of children; but until recently reformers have tended to advocate either more mild punishments than were customary in contemporary schools or else the discipline of natural consequences, in which the 'personal' element is as far as possible excluded. Modern psychology, however, which views behaviour in a cold, dispassionate, scientific way, is no more concerned with *morals* than is the doctor when treating a case of dipsomania or tabes dorsalis; and therefore it is not interested in punishment from an ethical point of view. Modern political doctrines, again which question the very roots of authority, have led some educationists to challenge the right of the teacher to punish the child, and to advocate the complete abolition of school punishments. Tolstoy organised a village school in which children were free to do as they liked, and were not even compelled to come to school if they did not wish to do so.¹ Mr. A. S. Neill's school at Summerhill² is apparently an institution of a similar type. Even if one criticises these experiments, there remains the fundamental question whether, in any case, punishment is the right treatment for

¹ An account of this Yasno-Polyana school is given in E. J. Simmons, *Leo Tolstoy*, chap. XIII.

² See A. S. Neill, *That Dreadful School*.

juvenile delinquency. It may be that the offences committed by our pupils are not due to original sin or to the infection of nature, but to the misdirection of strong impulses which, deprived of their normal outlet, are driven to seek satisfaction in irregular, or even antisocial, conduct. The remedy sanctioned by the psychologists in such cases is not punishment – *i.e.* further repression – but sublimation, or the transference of persistent and vigorous impulses from undesirable fields of interest to desirable ones.

For further reading

- J. J. Findlay, *The Foundations of Education*, Vol. II, chap. vii.
 W. Schohaus, *The Dark Places of Education*, *passim*.
 M. E. Highfield and A. Pinsent, *A Survey of Rewards and Punishments in Schools*. (National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales, 79, Wimpole Street, London, W.1.).
 A. B. Allen and E. H. Williams, *The Psychology of Punishment*.

CHAPTER 19

Experiments in self-government by pupils

The considerations which were discussed at the end of the last chapter have led to experiments in putting the maintenance of discipline, and much also of the organisation of school life, into the hands of the pupils themselves. One of the earliest, perhaps, was due to Thomas Wright Hill, father of Rowland Hill who introduced penny postage.¹ In the Hazelwood School, run by him and his three sons, the syllabus, in addition to the basic subjects, included a number of 'voluntary labours' – options in which a pupil could express himself according to his own individual aptitudes or inclinations. There was a committee, composed of pupils, which drew up the school rules. An infringement of them entailed appearance before a judge and jury, all of whom were boys. Fines could be imposed, and these were paid in dummy coins which had been earned, instead of ordinary marks, for work done in class or on the optional subjects. Other penalties were loss of privileges, or even confinement in a dark cupboard; but in every case the penalty was assessed and imposed by the culprit's schoolfellows.

A more elaborate experiment of this kind was carried out in the George Junior Republic,² a community first organised in 1895 by an American, William R. George, who had been

¹ A good account is given in R. L. Archer, *Secondary Education in the XIX Century*, pp. 90–6.

² See W. R. George, *The Junior Republic – History and Ideals*.

greatly interested in summer camps. He founded in New York State a kind of reformatory village of boys and girls who had been through the juvenile courts, or who found difficulty in fitting into ordinary society – the sort of offenders who had usually been dealt with by punishment. The community is housed on a farm and in cottages, and has an organisation based on the government of the United States itself. The older children make and administer their own laws; and, as in the great community, they have to maintain themselves (to some extent at any rate) by their labour, such as farming, carpentry, baking, printing, laundry and domestic work. They have their own currency and their own bank. They run a court where offenders are tried by their peers and where lawbreakers may be fined. The George Junior Republic is said to have proved a success, and other 'republics', modelled on it, have been established in several other of the United States. It could, however, hardly be imitated, as it stands, in a school of the normal type.

The Junior Republic has been imitated in this country in Homer Lane's Little Commonwealth, which was situated near Sherborne in Dorsetshire.¹ It again was designed for juvenile delinquents, but it came also to contain a number of normal children. Its outstanding feature was that, in spite of the record and character of many of its citizens, they were subject to no discipline or government which was not of their own making and administered by themselves. Like the members of the George Junior Republic, they regulated their affairs with the freedom and responsibility of a fully emancipated democracy. The Little Commonwealth had considerable success; but it was finally shut down by the Home Office. The circumstances which led to this action are fully

¹ See E. T. Bazeley, *Homer Lane and the Little Commonwealth*, W. D. Wills, *Homer Lane*, and Homer Lane, *Talks to Parents and Teachers*.

explained by the Bishop of Liverpool in his foreword to Homer Lane's *Talks to Parents and Teachers*.

The Junior Republic and the Little Commonwealth are rather extreme experiments in self-government and, as has been said, they are associated primarily with attempts to deal with the problem of juvenile delinquency. But the principle was applied to ordinary classroom discipline and organisation by E. A. Craddock, who described his experiment in *The Class Room Republic*. Mr. Craddock was a master in a London secondary school. He got his boys to elect a committee of five, and he put the discipline of the form, both inside and outside the classroom, into their hands. They were empowered to punish and reward, and even to decide the classwork 'within limits' (whatever that means). In the case of a serious offence a class-court, with a jury, was set up to decide punishments. These, however, were of a conventional kind - e.g. detentions, impositions and exclusion from organised games. Homework, wherever possible, was set and marked by the class representatives. A scheme of this kind might possibly be made to work or adopted in a modified form; for boys (and girls) are normally sensible and trustworthy creatures. It might prove perhaps a little dangerous in some cases, though it seems to have worked with delinquents in both the Junior Republic and the Little Commonwealth, where the *whole* of the child's environment was affected, and not merely a relatively small part of it. It is more likely that a scheme like the Class Room Republic would tend to flag when the novelty wore off and the officials became slack and uninterested. In any case, such a plan as Mr. Craddock's would involve an enormous amount of time and work for the class-committee.

A device not unlike that which has just been described was applied to a whole school by Mr. J. H. Simpson when

he was headmaster of Rendcomb.¹ This is a boarding school in the country near Cirencester. Its pupils comprise an approximately equal number of fee-paying pupils and scholarship-holders from the State schools. The affairs of the school are largely in the hands of a General Meeting at which no members of staff are present.² This has its chairman, secretary and other officers; and it meets once a week and also has emergency meetings. There are many sub-committees – e.g. for games, entertainments, house, library, finance, and even a sanitary committee. Thus the members of the school deal not only with disciplinary questions but also with the whole internal business of the school, apart from academic work and the ultimate financial responsibilities which must inevitably fall upon the headmaster.

Schools on experimental lines such as these exist up and down the country, and they are a challenge to stereotyped and traditional methods.³ Some of them go very far, as for example, Mr. A. S. Neill's not inappropriately named 'Dreadful School', where the staff (in theory at any rate) are on the same footing as the pupils. In his account of the school Mr. Neill tells of two masters who had (very reprehensibly) borrowed a boy's bicycle without permission, and who were condemned by the pupils to push each other on it ten times round the front lawn.⁴ Institutions of the Summerhill type not unnaturally provoke a good deal of criticism; but the fact remains that many of the things which used to be accepted unquestionably as part and parcel of the normal

¹ It is described in J. H. Simpson, *Sane Schooling*. In the book the school is called Churnside.

² See *Sane Schooling*, p. 87. At Frensham Heights, a school run on somewhat similar lines, the staff do attend the General Meeting (or they did when the writer visited the school).

³ Refer to *The Modern Schools Handbook* (ed. T. Blewitt).

⁴ See A. S. Neill, *That Dreadful School*, pp. 48-9.

school organisation have been jettisoned without evil results – and perhaps even with some good ones. One may instance marks, form-places, prizes. It may well be that a rigid organisation imposed from above, and rules laid down by authority and enforced by teacher-made penalties, are not necessarily the characteristics of a good school. Experiment in these matters is at any rate worth making, and the teacher should not be afraid of it.

For further reading

- W. R. George, *The Junior Republic*.
E. T. Bazeley, *Homer Lane and the Little Commonwealth*.
E. A. Craddock, *The Classroom Republic*.
J. H. Simpson, *Sane Schooling*.
W. D. Wills, *The Hawkspur Experiment*.
A. S. Neill, *That Dreadful School*.
Vernon Mallinson (ed.), *The Adolescent at School*.

OTHER PRACTICAL MATTERS

CHAPTER 20

Types of school

The kind of school in which the future teacher is to serve is usually decided during his course of professional training, and this is adapted to the particular aim in view. Teaching in some type of primary school – especially in the nursery or infant school – involves, of course, very special techniques, and the student who wishes to take up this work will devote a great deal of study and practice to it, in addition to following a general course. All the same, it is not unknown for graduates, who perhaps have not taken their specialised courses in a training college, to devote themselves to such work and to make a success of it. The writer has known several cases of this kind among his own students; and he even had once a psychology graduate who went into nursery school work and proved very effective. But the usual practice is for those who are to serve in primary schools to be trained in three-year colleges; and the courses available there are normally better adapted to this type of work than the more academically-specialised four-year course in a university. It is at the secondary school level that there is more diversity of choice, because it is here that schools tend to become classified in parallel types, and so to offer varieties of experience among which the teacher, once he is qualified, can make a choice. It is proposed, therefore, to discuss

briefly these different types of secondary school, and to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of each from the teacher's point of view.

There is first of all the secondary modern school. This has inherited some, at any rate, of the handicaps of the old senior 'elementary' school, though it has made, and is making, splendid efforts to overcome them. It owes much to the recommendations of the Hadow Committee.¹ It was intended to be not an inferior kind of secondary school, but to have 'parity of status' with other types; and like them it was to give 'a humane and general education . . . directed to the general fostering of mental power'.² Its differentia was its 'bias which for want of a better word we may call by the name "realistic"'. Its curriculum was to be designed to give 'large opportunities for practical work and (be) closely related to living interests'.³ In the modern school, 'sound teaching, it is recognised, must be based upon the pupil's interests; and these, though they may in time reach out to the end of the world, begin at home in the attraction and challenge of things around him'.⁴ Professor H. C. Dent in his valuable and authoritative *Secondary Education for All*, adds, 'It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the most successful Modern schools have based their practice on this precept'.⁵

Different types of secondary school – academic or non-academic – were discussed also in the Spens (1938) and Norwood (1943) Reports; but they are not specifically mentioned in the 1944 Education Act. There is no doubt, however, that the modern school, as one form of secondary

¹ See *The Education of the Adolescent* (Hadow Report, 1927).

² *Op. cit.*, p. xx.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 174.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 107.

⁵ p. 66.

education, however it is administered, has come to stay. It thus offers a possible field of service for those who aim at teaching children over the age of 11. The old senior schools tended to be avoided by graduate teachers, because the salaries paid in them were on the 'elementary' scale, which was considerably less attractive than that available in secondary (*i.e.* grammar) schools. But this anomaly was swept away in 1945 when a basic scale for teachers as such was introduced; and additional allowances were paid according to qualifications and experience. There is now no financial reason for preferring service in a grammar school to that in a modern school. Teachers who qualified from a three-year college, and who aim at secondary school work, will naturally find posts in the 'non-academic' modern school, because their training fits them for such work; but it also offers an interesting field for the graduate – especially perhaps for the teacher with a general degree.

The work tends to be hard. The classes too often are disgracefully large. There are many modern schools with beautiful buildings and abundant equipment; but far more of them have inherited the uncongenial and inadequate quarters which housed a former 'senior elementary school'; and some of these have come down, almost without adaptation, from the School Board days. Yet the dictum of Nicias that it is men and not walls, that make a city,¹ is equally true of a school. In spite of the abolition of fees, there tends still to be a larger proportion of pupils in the modern school, than in the grammar school, who come from homes where the cultural background is poor or entirely lacking, and where standards of speech and behaviour tend to militate against the school's endeavour to improve them. Yet these may well be the very reasons why a teacher, who has a sense

¹ ἄνδρες γὰρ πόλις, καὶ οὐ τέιχη. Thuc. VII, 77.7.

of vocation, would deliberately choose to serve in such a school. We give a special honour to the parson who works in a slum parish. The children who attend a modern school – especially in a poor neighbourhood – may stand in greater need of what it can do for them than those who come from more privileged homes, where life is easier and there is a higher standard of culture. And in any case a greater proportion of the nation's children pass through the modern school than through any other type of secondary school; and although an estimate of this quantitative type, though it is often employed, may well be misleading, yet it is not entirely without significance.

When secondary modern schools first came into existence one of the chief advantages claimed for them over the grammar school was that they would be free from the 'examination incubus'. In practice, however, many of them run G.C.E. courses and the institution of the Certificate of Secondary Education has provided a public examination which can be taken by pupils who leave school at 15. As however this is controlled by regional boards on which teachers are largely represented there is perhaps less danger of the curriculum being mainly conditioned by examination requirements. Thus there may be a greater freedom to experiment, to be untrammelled by traditional methods or outside control of the curriculum – in short, to educate. The work in many modern schools is still done by class teachers who take a form for most of its subjects; but there is a growing tendency, more often in the larger schools, to have specialists on the staff, particularly for such subjects as art or music. Handicrafts and domestic science are frequently taken in centres by highly-qualified teachers who give their whole time to their specialism.

The other type of secondary education is the academic –

that of the grammar school.¹ Its curriculum tends to be determined by the requirements of the public examinations which are taken by its pupils normally at about the age of 16. Whereas, therefore, the modern school has a basic four-year course, that of the grammar school has a minimum of five years and a maximum of eight. Preparing one's pupils for a public examination makes grammar school teaching hard work – but not usually for the same reason as service in a modern school. The pupils are highly selected, the classes tend to be smaller than in the modern school (though still too large), and therefore more scope is afforded for the treatment of pupils as individuals. But because of the academic type of work, the amount of preparation and correction involved is always considerable. Moreover, the grammar school is inevitably to a large extent a specialist school – to many teachers that is its chief attraction. The whole of one's professional career, lasting perhaps forty years, may be spent in teaching the same subject – e.g. French, classics or mathematics. One can really be a specialist under such conditions – and perhaps something of a scholar; but it implies keeping constantly and faithfully abreast of developments in one's subject, wide and deep reading, attendance at vacation courses, and profiting by any other means of refreshment and renewal. It is obvious therefore that, in order to undertake work of this type, high academic qualifications are essential – especially in a school of large size and good standing. Yet there is room in the

¹ H. C. Dent points out (*Secondary Education for All*, p. 63) that the Hadow Committee envisaged *two* main types of secondary school – that of the grammar school, and that of the modern school. He comments: 'I am sure that this is sound; that there are fundamentally only two main types of secondary education – the academic and the non-academic – and not three, as the Spens and Norwood Committees were later to suggest.'

grammar school for graduates of other types. The specialist may well have to fill in his time-table with subjects which may not even be directly related to his specialism. The form-master system, once universal, is by no means yet unknown. In favour of it one can argue that it helps to co-ordinate and integrate one's teaching, especially with subjects that have some kinship – *e.g.* English, history, and geography; Latin Greek and French; mathematics and science. It must also be remembered that a specialist graduate in high honours is by no means necessarily a good teacher; though, to say the least, this is just as liable to be true of the pass-man. Against the form-master system it may be argued that if pupils spend six or even seven periods a week with the specialist who teaches them English or classics or mathematics, he will get to know them pretty well as individuals; and that in the grammar school a subject specialist is usually a form master as well – *i.e.* he is responsible for a particular group of pupils, even if other masters also teach them. It may in any case be good, for older children especially, to have the advantage of contact with different teachers, with their varying personalities and viewpoints and interests. So there will probably be room in the grammar school both for the highly-qualified specialist and for the more generally equipped, but still academic, non-specialist. It is relevant to point out that promotion to a senior and responsible post in a grammar school – especially in a large and important one – is practically confined to the specialist with a good honours degree. The chance of obtaining a headship in a grammar school must always be regarded as problematical; it is perhaps even more so there than in the sphere of the modern school.

According to the Norwood Report, the curriculum of the technical school would be 'closely, though not wholly, directed to the special data and skills associated with a

particular kind of occupation . . . It would thus be closely related to industry, trades and commerce in all their diversity'.¹ The type of institution which the Norwood Committee had in mind was not the old junior technical school, with its rather narrow course lasting from 13 to 15 or 16, but a new type of technical high school running parallel with the grammar school. The technical course was not to be simply vocational, but rather a component in something really educational; and moreover the curriculum was still to include English, mathematics, science, history, geography, religious instruction, art and music. 'In other words,' says Professor Dent, 'the technical school course up to the age of 16 as envisaged by the Ministry is a grammar school course, but with a scientific or technological bias in place of a literary one.'² This means in practice that while instruction in purely technical subjects, such as machine-drawing or workshop practice or building crafts or shorthand or dressmaking, will of course be given by experts in such fields, the more academic background will be in charge of teachers who have been trained in the ordinary way. So that the technical school, under modern conditions, offers an interesting type of secondary education, and this field of work may well prove attractive to the teacher who comes from a training college or a university department.

The private or independent school is a category which includes a vast variety of institutions which agree only in the fact that they are outside the national system and receive no government grant. Some are owned by private individuals or by private companies, and may be run for private profit. Others – such are the vagaries of our nomenclature – may

¹ Norwood Report (1941), p. 4.

² H. C. Dent, *Secondary Education for All*, p. 156. For a discussion of the comprehensive school see *infra*, pp. 234–236.

be 'public' schools, some of them ancient foundations of considerable reputation, charging high fees and, although independent of State aid, deriving some of their resources from endowments. These 'non-State' schools therefore vary enormously in almost every particular, and it is quite impossible to generalise about them. Some undoubtedly are highly efficient and realise the wider meaning of education to an extent which is not always possible in the more crowded and mechanised State schools. It is in institutions of this type, too, that some of the most interesting experiments in modern education have been carried out. The smallness of the classes, the freedom from outside intervention, the life of a boarding-school community, the possibility of greater interest in the individual child – all these considerations may provide motives to induce the teacher to seek a post in a school of this type. It should be remembered, however, that the Department of Education and Science has indirectly the duty of staffing the schools in which the compulsory education of the nation's children is carried on. If therefore public money has been spent on the training of a teacher, it is not unreasonable that he should be required to serve in a State-aided school, and should not be free to apply for a vacancy in one outside the national system. If one is at liberty to serve in an independent school, one should be sure that it is of the right type. Service in an establishment run for the principal's private profit, where the salary scale is below Burnham level and there is no superannuation scheme or security of tenure, offers no future – particularly for a man. It may serve for a woman who is proposing to teach for a year or two, and then marry or take up some other career. But perhaps there are risks. The 'young man' may not come up to scratch, and then the distressed damsel may be landed in a career which leads only to a dead end.

For further reading

Board of Education, *The Education of the Adolescent* (Hadow Report, 1927).

Ministry of Education Pamphlets: *The Nation's Schools* (1); *A Guide to the Educational System of England and Wales* (2); *The New Secondary Education* (9).

Cheshire Education Committee, *The Secondary Modern School*.

H. C. Dent, *Secondary Education for All*.

F. M. Earle, *Reconstruction in the Secondary School*.

H. Davies, *The Boys' Grammar School; today and tomorrow*.

A Greenough, *Educational Needs of the 14-15 Group*.

A. Greenough and F. A. Crofts, *Theory and Practice in the New Secondary Schools*.

Association of Assistant Mistresses, *From Eleven to Eighteen* (pamphlet).

J. V. Chapman, *Your Secondary Modern Schools*.

CHAPTER 21

Applying for a post

The student in training may have decided to confine his applications to posts in one particular type of school. Unless his qualifications are such that he would obviously do his best work in a grammar school and would not find scope for his academic ability elsewhere, he may be better advised not to narrow his field of choice. If one is too exclusive or too particular, either about the exact type of school or the exact part of the country in which one wants to work, it may just possibly happen that one may find oneself left without a post, or may have to be content with something which after all is not very suitable.

What steps, then, should be taken to find a vacancy and to make an application? Posts for the Autumn term usually begin to be advertised about the middle of the Lent term, and vacancies may continue to appear until well into the summer vacation. It is advisable to get off the mark in good time. There is no need to be discouraged if one is not successful at first, or even if an interview is not offered. Many attempts may have to be made before anything happens – much depends on the state of the 'labour market'. If the candidate desires a post in a primary or secondary modern school it may be well to write a letter of inquiry to the Director of Education or Chief Education Officer of the local education authority under which he wishes to serve. Many local education authorities issue lists of vacancies from time

to time, and these are sent to training colleges and university departments. Advertisements for posts in secondary modern and primary schools are also to be found in *The Teacher* and other educational periodicals. For a post in a grammar school it is well to consult the advertisement columns of *The Times Educational Supplement*. There are circumstances in which it may perhaps prove advisable to enlist the help of a scholastic agency. Private firms charge a higher commission than some applicants are willing to pay; but the Joint Scholastic Agency (29, Gordon Square, London, W.C.1) established by the associations of heads and assistants in grammar schools, is more reasonable and is not run for profit. For a post in an independent school one would usually have to use an agency, unless it were to be filled by personal recommendation.

When what appears to be a suitable vacancy has been found, the next step is to make the application. Very often a special form is supplied for this purpose, and in filling it up the greatest care should be exercised. Always make a draft of what you propose to put down before you begin to do this; and keep a copy of the draft – it may come in useful for refreshing your memory about what you said, in case you are called up for interview. Fill up the form in ink and in your own handwriting; do not use a typewriter. Put your name in block capitals and write legibly. Be very careful about the spelling; in the writer's experience such phenomena as 'proffessor' or 'batchelor of science' are more common than one might imagine. Applicants sometimes enclose a photograph; but this is contra-indicated as being too risky. The form will probably give sufficient opportunity to say most of what is necessary, but a covering letter as well is usually asked for; and in any case it may be advisable. It will give the candidate a chance to fill in anything which the

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form omits — *e.g.* any special interests or experience which he may have had. The letter may be couched somewhat as follows:

Address,

Date.

The H.M.....School,
or: The Director of Education,.....Education Committee.

Dear Sir,

.....SCHOOL, ASSISTANT-MASTERSHIP.

I submit herewith an application for the post of assistant-master at the School. In addition to the details given on the enclosed form, I may perhaps say that

I enclose testimonials from (a), (b), and (c).

Yours faithfully (or truly),

.....

Do not describe yourself as an 'obedient servant', or give expression to any pious hope that you may be called for interview, or that if appointed you will devote yourself, body and soul, to the interests of the school. See that the form and your letter are clean and tidy and uncrumpled, and despatch them in a foolscap envelope. It may be wise to register it. If you wish for a return of your documents, enclose a stamped addressed envelope. If you want to be informed of the result of your application enclose a stamped postcard; you may get it back, but often there are so many applications that a busy headmaster or education officer or school secretary may find it difficult to attend to such matters.

If no form of application is supplied the letter of application must be much fuller. After the preliminaries indicated above, one might continue:

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I am years of age. I was educated at the School (name the secondary school only), and in 19.. I obtained a Certificate (give details). I then proceeded to the University of (or the Training College). [If an open scholarship was obtained this should be mentioned]. In 19.. I obtained the B.A. (B.Sc.) degree with (give details of honours or pass) and last October I entered the University Department of Education. [Or give particulars of Training College course and Certificate.] I have had (give *full* details of teaching practice.) I have played (particulars of games at school and college or university). I am also interested in (other out-of-class interests).

I enclose testimonials from (a), (b) and (c). Reference may also be made to (d), (e) and (f).

Yours faithfully (or truly)

.....

In making an application it is unwise to blow one's own trumpet too loudly, and so give the impression that one has too high a conceit of one's own powers. At the same time it is fatal to be too modest. You may have to encounter strong competition and you must make for yourself the best case you can. What exactly should be included under 'other interests'? Anything that has any real bearing on the out-of-class activities of a school; in particular, games, physical education, dancing, music, art, photography, handicrafts of all kinds, scouting or guiding, camping, social work, residence abroad, experience of military or national service, debating, literary work, gardening – the list could be greatly prolonged. But some discretion should be exercised. If you have been a member of the university Darts Team or the college Jazz Club, no mention of the fact need be made in your application.

Should a reference be made to one's religion (if any)?

If the applicant is a communicant member of the English Church and is applying for a post in a school which is a church foundation, the fact is certainly relevant and should be stated. Similarly with a Wesleyan or a Quaker or a Roman Catholic or a Jew, if he is a candidate for a vacancy in a school run by one of these religious bodies. But otherwise it will be advisable not to mention one's religious views. If one is asked about them at an interview (this is unlikely) one will say honestly and directly what they are. Does the same advice apply to political beliefs? There again one should be honest; though heresy hunts in this domain on the part of local authorities are strongly to be deprecated. It may, however, be wise to combine the wisdom of serpents with the harmlessness of doves. The teacher, even if he holds strong religious or political views, is not commissioned by the State or the local education authority or the parents – whose servant he becomes when taking up his post – to use the school as a platform for spreading them. A prospective employer, even if he personally sympathises with such opinions, may feel uneasy if you stress them unduly in your application for a post. A teacher has as much right as any other citizen (including the members of a local education authority who have been elected as councillors on a party basis) to hold views on political, social or religious issues. In fact he has greater freedom in this respect in Britain than in almost any other country in the world. But that very fact makes his responsibility all the greater. He should be a man to whom the community can entrust its most precious deposit with the utmost confidence that this trust will never be betrayed.

Applicants for teaching posts are usually asked to submit three testimonials, and it is important that these should be given by suitable people. Your prospective headmaster will

be chiefly interested to know whether you can teach well, and whether personally and socially you are an acceptable person. Your intellectual and academic qualifications are normally indicated by your degree, or by the details of your teacher's certificate. This means that, except perhaps for a first-post application, a testimonial from a professor or a lecturer under whom one has worked is not indicated, unless one manifestly did oneself less than justice in a crucial examination and it is desirable to have this fact explained. Even in an application for a first appointment not more than one testimonial of this type should be used. But anything which stresses the applicant's powers as a teacher will be useful; and therefore he should always submit a testimonial from the head of the university education department or training college. This would give two testimonials. A third may perhaps deal more particularly with personal characteristics, and may come from the head of the candidate's old school, or of his college or university hall of residence. Another possible source is the head of the school in which the bulk of one's teaching practice was done. The testimonials supplied by J.P.s, town-councillors, and ministers of religion, whom one happens to know, may possibly be helpful; but not all the members of these categories have learnt the art of concocting these documents. One with which the writer recently had to deal and which was written by the mayor of a Lancashire town, stated that: 'Miss X did her time at the Y Training College.' Another supplied by a parson, said: 'I shall follow Mr. Z's career with sympathy' – a remark which doubtless showed great insight. In practice it may be desirable to have five or six testimonials in hand, and to use them as seems best suited to a particular application. It need hardly be said that any kind of canvassing, such as, we are told, still goes on in certain localities, is utterly

unprofessional, and reflects the deepest discredit alike on the candidates and on the committees who appoint them.

No one is legally bound to supply a testimonial if asked to do so; but the request is rarely refused, although one may often be able to give greater help to a candidate as a referee than as a testimonial-writer. It need hardly be said that a prompt letter of thanks should be sent in reply to the receipt of a testimonial. An 'open' recommendation is preferable to an *ad hoc* one – i.e. one in which a specific post is mentioned. It is always possible to get the writer's permission for you to insert the name of the particular vacancy for which you apply. If a testimonial *does* refer to a definite post it must never be used for another; the name of the school may be changed only with the writer's permission. Never send original testimonials when applying for a job. Always have in hand a supply of typed duplicated copies, and send these with your application. Each testimonial should be headed with the name and titles or position, and if necessary the address of the writer. *E.g.*:

Copy of testimonial from J. Brown, Esq., M.A., Professor of Education in the University of Redbrick.

or:

Copy of testimonial from Miss B. King, B.Sc., Principal, Setterfield Training College, Barsetshire.

No alterations or omissions must ever be made in copies of a testimonial. If it gets out of date, it will be necessary to obtain the giver's permission before it is re-dated. In addition to the testimonials, it is quite usual for applicants to be asked to furnish the names of three persons to whom reference may be made. The following are possible, if they are not already writers of testimonials: head of old school or college or university hall of residence; housemaster; head

of practising school; tutor or supervisor; holder of some prominent public position. Never quote anyone's name as a referee without previously obtaining his permission.

From the applications received a short-list of three to six candidates is drawn up, and these candidates are summoned for interview. In a grammar school it is common for the head to interview and to make an appointment, which is then formally confirmed by the governors; but in some cases a small sub-committee of the governors, together with the head, may conduct the business. In other types of secondary school the appointment may be more directly in the hands of the education committee and the chief education officer. The head will doubtless be consulted and if he is influential and respected by the members of the local education authority he will certainly get the candidate whom he wants and for whom, after all, he will be responsible. The practice, however, of appointing teachers to the service of an authority and not to the staff of a particular school, ignores the needs of a school as an individual community, and weakens the responsibility of the head. Even if it makes for administrative convenience, it is – in the writer's opinion – to be deprecated. All this means that if you are summoned for an interview you may simply have a private talk with the head, with perhaps one or two governors, or a cross-examination by a full committee composed largely of councillors, some of whom may know very little of what the real issues are.

Students often ask how they should behave at an interview. One should try to be natural. That may conceivably be a handicap, but at any rate it is too late to do anything about it; and any attempt to play a part is easy to detect and will prove disastrous. Seven years in a grammar school, followed by a university or training college course, reinforced perhaps by experience in one of the 'services' or in some other

walk of life; ought to have given one the capacity to face up to social situations. If it has not done so, one has no right to contemplate becoming a teacher. This kind of attitude cannot be 'mugged up' for a special occasion. At the same time, it can be said in all seriousness that personal appearance tends to count for a good deal at an interview. Be careful about your dress – 'Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy; For the apparel oft proclaims the man.' Women candidates may be advised to go a little easy with those adventitious aids to beauty which do not serve to gild refined gold.

How should one act? Speak up – don't mumble. A marked local accent is not a social disgrace, as some people seem to think; but it tends, in this imperfect world, to be a handicap. A teacher, if only in view of his responsibility to his pupils, should at least be able to speak his own native languages correctly and acceptably. There are doubtless several types of 'standard English' – *e.g.* at least a southern, a northern, a Welsh, a Scottish and an Irish variety; and it does not matter greatly which of them you affect. It would be dull if we all aspired to a B.B.C. accent. The speech-training lessons which form part of any course taken by the intending teacher should serve to provide help and advice in cases where it is necessary, and to reach the student also how to use his voice clearly and effectively while he is teaching; and all this will be useful when the time comes for an interview.

Be courteous, but not obsequious. If you like, you may call the chairman of the committee, or the headmaster 'Sir', because it helps him to feel important and therefore well-disposed towards you. Answer the questions which are put as fully and as clearly as you can, but keep to the point and don't talk too much. If you are asked to teach (*e.g.*) German

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or singing, and you *can't*, don't be afraid to say so; but show willingness to fit in and adapt yourself. Take with you to the interview the originals of your degree *testamur* or certificate, and of your testimonials. You may be asked to show them.

For further reading

For vacant posts consult the advertisement columns of *The Times Educational Supplement*, *The Teacher* and *Education*. For lists of 'recognised' schools of various types see *The Education Authorities Directory and Annual* or the *Education Committees Year Book*. List 70, published by H.M.S.O., gives all the independent schools in England and Wales which are recognised as efficient. See also *The Public Schools Year-Book* and *The Girls' School Year-Book*, which deal more particularly with the independent schools. *Schools* (published by Truman and Knightley) gives a list of private schools.

Scholastic Agencies:

The Joint Scholastic Agency Ltd., 29, Gordon Square, W.C.1.
Truman and Knightley, 91-93, Baker Street, W.1. Gabbittas-Thring
Educational Trust, 6, 7 and 8, Sackville Street, W.1.

CHAPTER 22

One's first post

We will suppose now that you have successfully survived the interview and have been offered the appointment. If the notice of this comes by post, you will of course send a reply by return; and that reply must be a definite one – yes or no. It is not possible to accept a teaching appointment conditionally on not being offered some other vacancy for which you have applied. This kind of dilemma not infrequently arises if a candidate has been up for two or three interviews at about the same time. If you are offered a post you must make up your mind. It is not fair to a school to be left in any kind of uncertainty, and then to have to advertise the vacancy all over again when perhaps other eligible candidates are no longer available. If you have gone so far as to accept an interview there is a strong moral obligation to take the post if it is offered, unless there are considerations of material importance which came to light for the first time when you met the appointing committee, and which led you to decide not to go on with the application. But in that case the right course is to withdraw at the interview itself. Your reasonable expenses for attending as a short-listed candidate will be refunded under ordinary circumstances; but if you do withdraw you may forfeit your right to this reimbursement.

During the holidays before you take up your appointment you will probably receive from your prospective head-

master, or from a responsible subject master, a scheme of work or time-table. You will, of course, do whatever you can to make yourself ready for the particular duties which are assigned to you – *e.g.* by getting up some subject, or part of it, in which you are rusty, by re-reading set books, or by planning out schemes of work. It is possible that you may be required to attend a staff meeting, held perhaps on the day before the term begins. In any case it is advisable to arrive in your school neighbourhood a day or two before that; the school authorities will doubtless have done their best to find you some suitable lodgings. It may be well to call upon the head – at the school, and *not* at his private house – in order to report your arrival and to see if he has any instructions for you.

Your relations with him, as one of his colleagues, will be determined largely by the sort of person he is. You will receive a good deal of information on this point (some of it, perhaps, not very reliable) if you listen to the conversation which goes on in the staff common-room. But you will soon form your own opinions. The average head is anxious to help his staff, for it is they who really make or mar the efficiency of the school for which he is responsible; and he himself has been an assistant in his time. In the old days the staff were quite literally 'assistants'. They were appointed directly and solely by the headmaster in order to 'assist' him in running the school. They were his employees, very much as a domestic servant or gardener is employed by a householder. He bargained with them for their salaries and, as he was often responsible for the finance of the school, he could appoint or dismiss them at pleasure. All this implied a big gulf between the status of the headmaster and that of the assistant, and a degree of subservience which could hardly exist under present conditions. Nowadays the headmaster

and his colleagues are alike employees of the governors or the local education authority; and it is only in private schools run for profit that the former dependence of the assistants on the head persists. It might be well if we could give up using the term *assistant* master, or mistress or teacher, and call the members of the staff of a school simply masters or mistresses or teachers, with a *headmaster* (or mistress or teacher) in charge.

Although this position of *primus inter pares* is now the normal one, it should be remembered that the head is held responsible for everything that goes on inside the school. If, owing to your carelessness, a child is injured, the head may ultimately get the blame; if you teach badly or your discipline is poor, and the school suffers as a result, the head may be regarded as responsible by the authorities. There is perhaps some compensation in that, if things go well, owing to the exertions and efficiency of the staff, the head may receive a disproportionate share of the *kudos* – though he usually hands a bouquet to his colleagues in his report on speech-day. But you will do well to realise the extent of his responsibilities, and what that implies. The powers of heads have been considerably undermined by local education officials of various sorts, until in some cases their office is little more than an executive one; but it still remains true that inside his school the head's position is almost autocratic. The attempts which have been made to run schools by means of committees seem to the writer as ill-considered as a proposal to put the command of a ship into commission among the officers. But though the head of an ordinary school has this petty, but none the less real, autocratic authority, in practice it is – as a rule, at any rate – exercised reasonably. Whatever a head does is criticised; life in the common-room would be very dull without this perennial topic of conversa-

tion. But he often has opportunities of seeing more and further than most of his colleagues; and for that reason his actions – even if not always acceptable to them – may in the end be wisest.

The fact that the head carries this responsibility, and that he is your 'chief', implies that you should treat him with a certain amount of deference – due not necessarily to him as a person (though he may even merit this!), but at any rate to his office. It is – or used to be – customary in most (or many) boys' grammar schools for the staff to call the head 'Sir' or 'Headmaster', when addressing him. In girls' schools such formalities are less usual; though the writer knows one such school where the headmistress is called 'Ma'am'. Behind his back the head will probably be known as the 'Old Man', or something even less complimentary. The headmistress, who got to know that her unofficial title was 'Pansy', was not so pleased when she learnt that it was an abbreviation of 'Chimpanzee'. But though one should show to the head the usual marks of deference and politeness due to his superior office, there is not the least reason to be afraid of him – still less, to 'kowtow' to him. If you feel that you have been unfairly treated and have a real case, go to him and explain your grievance in a frank, open, ungrouching way. If you have difficulties with your work or your pupils, or if you do not understand something that you have been instructed to do, lay your troubles before him. He is almost always very busy – the average head works even harder than the average assistant, though his work may not be so concentrated; but if there is no senior member of staff who has been detailed to look after and help new arrivals, and if your difficulties are not simply trivial ones, you will probably find the head ready to hear and to help you. When the present writer was first appointed to a headmastership, an educationist of out-

standing repute and of great and wide experience, said to him: 'Remember that one of the first duties of a headmaster is to help young teachers'. If you show keenness to do your job well and to serve the school cheerfully and ungrudgingly, and if you carry out the duties assigned to you punctually, as well as effectively, your work will be appreciated by the head; and that will make for happy, friendly and easy relations with him.

We have next to consider your position with regard to your colleagues on the staff of the school to which you have been appointed. When you first arrive you are in much the position of a 'fresher' in a college or a hall of residence. It is well therefore to cast one's mind back a few years and profit by one's own experience. The principle of seniority is strongly felt in most common rooms. There is the senior master or mistress who is the link between the staff and the head, whose duty it is to help in the organisation of the school and to represent the views of the head to the staff, and of the staff to the head. That is a most difficult and responsible position. It may well be that it is harder to be a good senior assistant than a good head. Then there are also the heads of departments and responsible subject masters. You will be particularly concerned with the one in whose province your speciality lies. It will be your duty to co-operate loyally with him by teaching the parts of the syllabus assigned to you, and by doing other duties with which you may be entrusted. Apart from specific posts of this type, mere seniority in the profession counts for something. It is not unreasonable that a young teacher should show a certain respect and consideration for those colleagues who are much older than he, and far more experienced as teachers.

In view of what has been said, it will be wise to avoid being too hearty or talkative when you first start. In particu-

lar do not have too much to say about what you did when you were at the University or at College, or what you intend to do in the school. Do not be too pushing or critical or anxious to reform the place. You may, for example, find that the school does not possess a chess-club, and may feel that you are the very person to start one. But beware of rushing in too precipitately. It is just possible that only last term there was a considerable unpleasantness arising out of just such a proposal; and that one or two people are still feeling rather sore about it. In a small and circumscribed community like a school staff, members may become very sensitive about what they consider to be their rights and privileges. Beware of treading on toes or offending susceptibilities; but if you are asked to do something, and it is within your compass, be ready at once to comply. Undertake cheerfully your share of routine jobs – umpiring or refereeing, dinner supervision, detention or preparation duty, help with school societies, and so on. You will doubtless make two or three special friends among your colleagues, even if – as should be the case – you are on the best of terms with all of them. But – and this is particularly important – beware of cliques. Happy is the staff that has none. Try to be friendly and polite to all those with whom you have to work, even if cliques do exist; and avoid listening to, or repeating, gossip or spiteful comments about the head or any of your colleagues.

The young teacher is not likely to have much to do with education officials. There have been, and are in increasing numbers, really distinguished directors of education, who are not only very able administrators, but also men of ideas and ideals. One might quote as examples Mr. E. Salter Davies, Sir Philip Morris, Professor Lester Smith – and many another. National education owes an enormous debt to such men. But education officers are not all of this type.

Some tend to retain a limited and bureaucratic outlook. They are inclined to regard schools not so much as free and living organisms, but rather as components in an administrative machine. Some of the councillors who sit on local education committees may also regard teachers more as 'employees' or potential trade unionists than as members of a free profession dedicated to the service of the community; though here again, let us hasten to say, one meets large numbers of public-spirited and enlightened men and women, from all ranks and walks of life, who have a genuine interest in education, and spare no time or effort to further it.

It is possible that from time to time the teacher in his practice will be visited by inspectors. There are two types – those employed by the local authorities and H.M.I.s who represent the Department of Education and Science. From the point of view of the teacher their functions are much the same – they visit you to see how you are getting on, what sort of a person you are, and how you can best be helped. Inspectors seem to be more in evidence in what used to be called 'elementary' schools, than in other types of school. This may perhaps be an inheritance from the days of 'payment by results', when every school of that kind had to be examined and assessed periodically for the payment of grant. It was an abominable system, and often led to a trial of wits between the teacher and the inspector. According to Mr. G. A. N. Lowndes, 'the teacher was put in the false position of having to outwit the Inspector, whose sums were passed quickly from school to school or sometimes published in 'The Teacher's Aid'. Some teachers employed an elaborate code of signs to tell their class what was expected of them, *e.g.* hands in pockets = multiplication, hands behind back = subtraction, etc. The Inspector on his part was forced to look for subterfuge and became the enemy of

the teacher instead of his counsellor and coadjutor in securing educational advance.¹ Under such conditions the teacher tended to look forward with dread to the inspector's visit. But that situation has long since passed away, and there is no need whatever to be alarmed. It may be a little embarrassing to have to teach in front of someone else; but your course of training should have afforded you plenty of experience of that kind.

Inspectors, like headmasters, differ one from another; but their office, so far as the teacher is concerned, is not to offer destructive criticism, but to assist. After seeing you teach, the inspector may wish to have a talk with you about your methods, your problems, and your work generally. This is an opportunity which you should welcome; and you should never hesitate to discuss matters and, if necessary, put your own points of view. Someone has compared inspectors to bees which fly from flower to flower, carrying the fertilising pollen. In unmetaphorical language this means that they should carry good ideas from one school to another, for the mutual benefit of all concerned. At any rate, they are not a type of secret police, preparing dossiers of teachers in which nothing but faults and short-comings are recorded. As a matter of fact, they are in practice more often concerned with administrative problems than with individual teachers. It is only at a 'full-dress' inspection, on which a formal printed report is presented to the governors or the local education authority, that each subject and each teacher is specifically inspected and reported upon; and that kind of inspection occurs comparatively rarely.

For further reading

R. W. Rich, *The Teachers in a Planned Society*, chapters iv and v.

¹ G. A. N. Lowndes, *The Silent Social Revolution*, p. 14.

CHAPTER 23

Professional societies. Unprofessional conduct

In the first chapter of this book some allusion was made to the benefits of joining a professional society.¹ The largest and best-known of such associations is the National Union of Teachers, which was formed in 1870 as the National Union of Elementary Teachers. It dropped the term 'elementary' in 1889, and ever since has opened its ranks to teachers in other types of school; but it remains preponderantly a society of teachers who work in the type of school which, before the 1944 Education Act, was classed as 'elementary'. Under any circumstances this would be the case, because teachers in such schools form numerically the bulk of the profession. There is no doubt about the power and importance of the N.U.T. It carries great weight with the Department of Education and Science and the Association of Education Committees and on the Burnham Committee; and it has done much by negotiation to improve the lot of the teacher and to advance the cause of education generally. The Teacher's Provident Society is run for the benefit of members of the N.U.T.; and it also has a Benevolent and Orphan Fund. It has large funds available not only for insurance against death and sickness, but also for house purchase and other purposes, and it affords a convenient

¹ See *supra*, pp. 12-13.

means for investing savings. The headquarters of the N.U.T. are at Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London, W.C.1, and there are strong local associations in all parts of the country. In Scotland a somewhat similar society is the Educational Institute which has offices at 46, Moray Place, Edinburgh. There are smaller sectional societies which run more or less parallel with the National Union of Teachers. The National Association of Schoolmasters (59, Gordon Square, W.C.1) seeks to ensure that boys of secondary school age are taught by men. The National Union of Women Teachers (41, Cromwell Road, S.W.7) was formed to advocate equal pay for men and women in the profession; but this has now been achieved.

There are two incorporated societies which cater particularly for the staff of grammar schools—the Assistant Masters' Association and the Assistant Mistresses' Association. Both have their headquarters at 29, Gordon Square, London, W.C.1. These two bodies cannot, of course, boast the numerical strength or the financial resources of the N.U.T., but they do claim – and with some justice – that their influence with the Department and with local authorities has a special value for their members. They do more definitely safeguard the academic interests of the grammar school. The Associations of Headmasters and Headmistresses also represent the grammar school. There has been an increasing tendency for the four grammar school associations to get together as 'Joint-Four', in order to discuss their common problems.

It has been suggested that the whole profession would be strengthened if a federation of teachers' societies were formed. The N.U.T., in particular, has advocated such a step; but in that case amalgamation might be tantamount to the swallowing-up of the smaller associations. In any case

it might be difficult to get a federation in which all interests were equally secured – *e.g.* those of the grammar school societies and of the Associations of Teachers in Technical Institutes – not to mention the Headmasters' Conference (heads of public schools), the Independent Schools Association, the Association of University Teachers, and many others. Unless there is some common purpose and all branches of the profession are fully represented, a federated association might not prove very effective. It would become possible only when the profession itself is federated. Much has happened recently to make such a federation far more real than it used to be. Perhaps in proposing to federate our associations we are beginning at the wrong end – though that itself is a matter of opinion. What is less doubtful is that a greater sense of unity in the teaching profession is still much to be desired, and that it should be fostered by any means that are really effective.

Every profession has some code of what is 'done' or 'not done' by its members in their relations one with another and with those with whom they have to deal professionally. This code may be committed to writing – as, for example, in the doctor's Hippocratic oath – or it may be simply an unwritten tradition. But one of the Societies mentioned above did draw up a list of actions which should be regarded as unprofessional; and though they were envisaged rather exclusively in terms of membership of the society than of the profession, it may be helpful to examine a few of them. It was stated, for example, to be unprofessional:

... For any teacher to take an appointment from which, in the judgment of the Executive, a member of the (society) has been unjustly dismissed.

It is obviously unfair for a teacher to profit by an injustice

done to a colleague in the profession. Cases have arisen where professional societies have 'black-listed' schools in which members of staff have been victimised; and teachers are asked not to apply for vacancies in such places without first consulting their association.

... For any teacher to make a report on the work or conduct of another teacher without at the time acquainting the teacher concerned with the nature of it, if it be a verbal report, or without showing it, if it be written, and allowing the teacher concerned to take a copy of it.

This might conceivably cover the case of a confidential inquiry made to a head about a teacher who is applying for a post; but perhaps it refers to a report made by one assistant on another. It might be required as part of the duty of the responsible subject master, especially in a large school, to make a confidential report from time to time to the headmaster on the work of his colleagues who served in his department and for whom he was largely responsible. There seems nothing seriously objectionable in this practice, if it is the custom of the school. But, except in cases such as this, reports by one teacher on another are neither called for nor justified.

... For any teacher systematically to detain scholars in primary schools for extra tuition.

This refers to the practice of coaching junior school pupils out of school hours for the selection examination for secondary schools. Many local education authorities forbid the practice altogether, and all of them ought to do so.

... For any teacher to canvass for scholars either personally by means of the school staff, by circular or otherwise.

This is probably out-of-date since the 1944 Act, because any State school, whether primary or secondary, is filled

up automatically, and the school authorities do not need to canvass. With a public school or a private school, which depends partly or wholly on its *clientèle* for its finances, the position may possibly be rather different. The manifesto may, however, refer to the private coaching of pupils out of school hours. Of course, such work must never be undertaken without the full knowledge and consent of the school authorities. But if it is asked for and permission has been obtained, it would be considered unprofessional to take such a pupil at a fee lower than that regarded as a standard, or to take a pupil who had been refused by a colleague because his parents were not willing to pay this fee. If you are asked to undertake coaching of this kind, it will be well to consult your senior colleagues as to the terms which should be asked.

... For any teacher to censure other teachers, or to criticise their work in the hearing of the scholars.

This is obviously sound. The less you criticise your colleagues, the better for all concerned. The stricture applies particularly to heads censuring assistants in front of pupils – or even in front of colleagues. It is a most reprehensible practice.

... For any teacher to seek to compel another teacher to perform outside school hours, any task which is not essentially connected with the ordinary work and organisation of the school.

Here, perhaps, there is some slight smack of the 'trade union' attitude which was supposed to (and in some cases did) characterise the old type of 'elementary' school. But schools are not factories or offices, where everyone packs up and goes home directly the bell is rung, and 'overtime' is strictly assessed in hard cash. A certain amount of duties outside ordinary classwork may quite legitimately be

required of a teacher. When the writer was a headmaster most of his colleagues taught for $23\frac{1}{4}$ hours a week; but he was required by regulations to see that each of them did a minimum of 30 hours. The balance was to be achieved by supervising games or societies, dinner, and the like; and an allowance could be made for correction of work. But, even so, the amount is hardly excessive. In actual practice the members of the staff of any reputable school put in an average of far more than 30 hours in the week on school work – especially if one counts in the time spent during holidays in running camps or cycling tours or other corporate activities. These are by no means confined to any particular type of school.

... For any teacher to be found guilty of conduct detrimental or injurious to the interests and for honour of the profession.

Obviously, any kind of immoral conduct is unprofessional – just as it is ungentlemanly and un-Christian and anti-social and unethical. One can be absolutely efficient at one's job as an engineer or a stockbroker or an army officer or a butcher or a dustman, and yet have low standards of personal and private conduct outside one's strictly professional work. But that is impossible for the teacher. He is in school not just to teach mathematics or French, but to help his children to become decent people. He cannot do this simply by precept; his private, as well as his professional, life is involved. Like the parson, he must practise what he preaches if he is to be in the very least worthy of his profession. 'Whosoever shall offend (*i.e.* cause to stumble) one of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea.' That, after all, is the final pronouncement concerning 'un-professional conduct'.

For further reading

A. Tropp, *The School Teacher*.

Literature issued by the professional societies – especially the National Union of Teachers, The Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters, and the Association of Assistant Mistresses, Incorporated.

Articles on *Professional Ethics* and *The Pathology of Professionalism* by F. H. Hayward in *The Encyclopaedia and Dictionary of Education* (ed. Foster Watson).

CHAPTER 24

Legal matters affecting teachers

A teacher who is taking up a new appointment is usually asked to sign an agreement which has already been drawn up by the governors or the local education authority. The *Primary and Secondary Schools Regulations* of the Ministry of Education laid it down that 'a teacher, other than an occasional teacher, shall be employed under a written agreement, or, in the case of a teacher appointed by an Authority, either under a written agreement or under a minute of the Authority'.¹ The agreement is often in a printed or stereotyped form. Thus it is not really a contract in which each party is free to bargain, as is done – for example – in drafting the lease of a house. But in practice the terms of a teacher's agreement will have been under the notice of his professional society, and normally its terms will not be objectionable, so far as he is concerned. The appointment is sometimes made verbally by the head, or the sub-committee, at the time of the interview; but in any case a formal confirmation in writing from the Clerk to the Governors or the Director of Education will follow in a day or two. The copy of the agreement to be signed may accompany this, or may be forwarded later. If any of its terms appear to be unsatisfactory, you should consult your professional association before signing.

The agreement will probably specify that the appoint-

¹ Schedule II.

ment can be terminated by a month's or six weeks' or two months' notice, taking effect at the end of a term.¹ This applies to both sides; and it means that the teacher must not expect to be set free to take up another appointment without giving the proper notice. Dismissal of a teacher without notice is possible in cases of misconduct; though in practice there would usually be a suspension pending an inquiry. In such cases the agreement provides for an appeal to the governors or local education authority. The teacher would be entitled to have full reasons for the dismissal or suspension given to him, and he would be afforded an opportunity to state his case. In such a situation he should of course put the whole matter into the hands of his professional association, which will provide him with full legal assistance free of cost. It may be noted that, according to the 1944 Education Act, 'no woman shall be disqualified for employment as a teacher in any county school or voluntary school, or be dismissed from such employment by reason only of marriage'.²

In view of the employer's right to dismiss a teacher after giving the notice specified in the agreement, it might seem that he has little security of tenure. He certainly has no 'freehold' in his office, and strictly he holds it only during the pleasure of the education authority. But in practice there is considerable security of tenure, and this state of affairs is largely due to the activities of professional associations. It is possible that the dismissal of a teacher may be necessitated by the reduction of the number of pupils owing to decreasing

¹ A longer notice may be required in the case of a head. For full details as to the law relating to the appointment and dismissal of teachers see M. M. Wells and P. S. Taylor, *The New Law of Education* (i.e. the 1944 Education Act), pp. 136-7.

² Section 24.

population in the school area, or by some scheme of re-organisation; but in that case ample notice will have been given and normally a local education authority will transfer a displaced teacher to another school under its control. All the same, hard cases have been known to occur, and the 'black-listing' of schools, in the rare cases when it does occur, is usually due to something of this kind. It should be noted that, in the case of a first appointment, the initial year in a post is usually regarded as probationary, and some reference to this condition is made in the agreement. It may be advisable to ask the head well in advance whether the appointment is to be confirmed, so that, if need be, there will be plenty of time in which to apply elsewhere.

Some reference to salary scales was made in the first chapter of this book. When the Burnham Committee was first constituted in 1919 there was no statutory duty laid upon local authorities to pay the scales which it drew up. But by the 1944 Education Act, when the Committee submits a scale which they consider suitable, the Minister may approve it, and by order make provision to secure that salaries paid by local education authorities are in accordance with that scale.¹ It is the practice in most schools for an instalment of salary to be paid at the end of each month, and a double instalment at the end of July. It was not always so. At one school in which the writer served, salary cheques were paid at the end of each term; so that there was a *hiatus valde deflendus* towards the latter part of the Autumn term.

In the teacher's agreement there is usually some reference to absence. If this is due to illness, salary is usually allowed according to some definite scheme – e.g. three days' absence

¹ Section 89.

may be permitted without further formality. It is, however, quite essential to inform the school *immediately*;¹ you must never be absent without letting the head know, telling him the cause, and if possible sending some suggested work for the forms which you should have taken and which will have to be handed over to colleagues (who will lose their spare periods). After three days away from duty, you may be required by your agreement to supply a medical certificate. See that this also is sent in good time. For long absences half a term on full pay may possibly be allowed, and the next half-term on half-pay. After this the post may perhaps be kept open for the time being, but no salary allowed. The treatment which a teacher receives will depend on his seniority on the staff, and the generosity (or lack of it) of the governors and the local education authority. But in any case one is bound by the terms of one's contract; and for that reason, as was suggested in Chapter 1,² it is wise to insure against sickness, and to use the facilities for this purpose which the professional associations provide. If one's illness becomes permanent there is the possibility of a breakdown allowance or short-service gratuity; but it is hardly possible to live on the amount which they provide.

Another reason for absence is an accident. If an injury to a teacher results from an accident arising out of, or in course of, his employment, he has a statutory right to benefit under the National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act. In any case, if his injury is due to faulty apparatus or defective premises – which would argue negligence on the part of the employer – he could claim damages at common law, and these would probably be awarded. But otherwise

¹ Notice must also be sent directly a case of infectious illness occurs in the house where the teacher is living.

² See *supra*, p. 12.

he would have to accept the ordinary risks of his daily job. For example, if, owing to his own carelessness or excess of enthusiasm, he slipped off the platform while declaiming Hamlet's soliloquy for the benefit of his form, and in so doing broke his leg, he could hardly substantiate a claim. But if the teacher's platform gave way because it was out of repair, and a broken leg was the result, a claim might well be justified. The moral is that one should inform the head immediately if anything seems defective or dangerous. He will report the matter to the governors or the local education authority; and then the onus of responsibility lies with them. In the case of an accident to a teacher happening off the school premises and out of school hours, the head should at once be informed – as in the case of absence due to illness.

Another reason for absence may be termed 'private affairs' – *e.g.* the wedding or funeral of a relative, sitting for an examination, house-removal, and the like. In a grammar school the power to grant leave of absence for such purposes may rest with the headmaster. He may or may not be 'sticky'; and in any case he will probably have to justify his action at the next meeting of the governors, or in a return to the Education Office. Or there may be some definite regulation laid down by the local education authority to cover such cases, and all teachers in its service will be bound by this. In any case, be very chary of asking for leave of absence for private reasons. It implies that some of your colleagues will have to do your work for you; and it also tends to derange the continuity of your own teaching. Nothing makes a teacher more unpopular with his colleagues than absences which they feel are not really justified.

It is possible that the agreement may include some definition of a teacher's duties and even specify the length of the teaching hours in a week. Some reference to this has

already been made.¹ If a maximum and a minimum are laid down, the head is usually left to adjust them when making up a time-table. He will try to allot a proper number of free periods, though senior and responsible teachers may naturally be allowed more time for non-class duties than junior members of staff. Everyone is, of course, expected to help in the general life of the school; though, according to the Ministry of Education's *Primary and Secondary Schools Regulations*, a teacher shall not be required to perform 'any duties except such as are connected with the work of the school.'² The 1944 Act provides that there shall not be imposed on teachers 'duties upon days on which the school or college is not open for instruction, or duties in respect of meals other than the supervision of pupils.'³ The *Provisions of Meals and Milk Regulations* also lay it down that an authority must employ an adequate staff, other than teachers, for the preparation and service of meals, although teachers may be required to supervise school dinners, unless this duty would adversely affect their teaching. There should be no niggardly interpretation of regulations such as these. Your head and your colleagues alike will think all the more of you if you are ready to help outside the classroom as well as in it.

Sometimes there is a clause in the agreement to the effect that a teacher is not to have other work. In practice this is interpreted pretty freely, and in fact the *Primary and Secondary Schools Regulations* – to which reference was made above – definitely state that 'the teacher shall not be required . . . to abstain outside the school hours from any

¹ See *supra*, pp. 204–205.

² *Primary and Secondary Schools (Grant Conditions) Regulations, 1945* (S. R. and O. 1945, No. 636), Schedule II.

³ Section 49.

occupations which do not interfere with the due performance of his duties'.¹ The evening classes at a Technical Institute, for example, are often staffed mainly by teachers from local day schools, and that with the full consent of the local education authority. One may even be invited to undertake such work. Of course, the permission of the head of one's school must always be obtained, from whatever source the request comes. But if some outside job offers, *e.g.* coaching or examining for a public body or the writing of a text-book – or if you are working for an examination in your free time, it is as well to let the head know. Under the terms of the regulation cited above neither he nor the local education authority can control the use which you make of your time out of school; but it is advisable to have everything above board, and not to risk any discussion as to the exact interpretation of the phrase 'having other work'.

Attendance at school prayers is another matter which may come within the ambit of one's 'duties'. Is the teacher bound to be present at the act of collective worship at the beginning of morning school, which is prescribed by the 1944 Act?² It is part of the school session and it seems reasonable that you should be required to attend, if only to look after your particular class. The Act certainly lays it down that a teacher is not to be 'deprived of, or disqualified for, any promotion or other advantage by reason of the fact that he does or does not give religious instruction or by reason of his religious opinions or of his attending or omitting to attend religious worship'.³ If you have sincere and serious conscientious objections the head may be willing to arrange for you to do some other duty while prayers are in progress – *e.g.* taking

¹ Schedule II.

² Section 25 (i).

³ Section 30.

charge of those pupils who are excused attendance at the request of their parents. But unless something of this kind can be done, the situation is an undesirable one. Your colleagues, who do turn up regularly for prayers and take charge of their forms, may resent your attitude; and the pupils will wonder why you alone do not appear.

Some of the most difficult situations arise out of the fact that a teacher not only has the duty of teaching pupils, but is also in charge of them. It has been laid down repeatedly in legal decisions that he is *in loco parentis* – a phrase which apparently dates back to the Roman poet Juvenal.¹ This implies that the parent delegates to the teacher so much of his authority as is necessary for the child's welfare. The teacher, in short, is to take such care of his pupils as a wise parent would of his own children. The duty may become urgent, particularly in the case of an accident to a pupil. Your immediate considerations should be: What action would a sensible parent take? If you are qualified to render first-aid (and every teacher should have taken a course in it during his training) you should do this; but if the accident occurs in school hours you will at once report it to the head – send another child to him – and then his is the responsibility and he must assume charge. He will take whatever steps seem to be advisable with regard to calling in medical assistance, and he will probably be required by regulations to report the matter to the governors or local education authority.

Suppose, however, that you are away from school, in charge of a team which is playing an away match, or on a school journey or expedition, and some accident to a pupil occurs. You are still on duty and responsible for those in your charge. It is therefore always wise, whenever there is

¹ *Di praeceptorem sancti voluere parentis Esse loco.* (Sat. VII, 209).

the slightest doubt, to call in medical aid without delay. It is safer to err on the side of fussiness; for if you fail to send for the doctor and unpleasant results ensue, you may be held to have been negligent. If a question of paying a fee is involved, the matter can as a rule be adjusted, and the head and the local education authority will support you. At the same time, use common sense and avoid doing things which might possibly lead to an accident. Do not, for example, give your pupils permission to climb rotten trees or to bathe where there are strong currents; nor ask them to do any kind of job where there is possible danger to life and limb. Also be careful to see that undue risks in games are avoided. To quote an example of what may occur: A boy whose skull was fractured in a school practice match was awarded heavy damages; and the judge, in giving his decision, said: 'I find that the little boy was in a dangerous position. . . . Owing to his other duties as umpire Mr. X (the master in charge of the game) failed to exercise the care which the law requires from a master in charge of a pupil in these circumstances.'¹

We turn now to the punishment of pupils. The law recognises the parent's right to correct his child within reason for faults, and this right is delegated to the teacher in virtue of his position *in loco parentis*. But it has been laid down in a legal decision² that the teacher's punishment of a pupil must be (a) moderate, (b) such as is usual in the school, (c) such as a parent might expect that the child should receive if it did wrong, (d) not dictated by any bad motive – e.g. anger or spite. It is well in practice to use these as criteria. Some reference to punishments may be made in a school prospectus, or at any rate the parent may be asked to

¹ See *The Times*, July 12th, 1939.

² See C. E. Bridges, *The Teacher's Legal Handbook*, p. 97.

co-operate in seeing that his child, so long as he remains a member of the school, observes the rules as set out in the prospectus. Thus the parent shares with the pupil the responsibility for good behaviour; and the writer, when a headmaster, found this fact of great assistance. The legal position as regards corporal punishment, in particular, has been made clear.¹ It must not be administered in a passion, it must not be immoderate or protracted beyond the child's power of endurance or inflicted with an instrument unsuited for the purpose or dangerous. In many schools – and in all sensible ones – it is a rule that if corporal punishment is retained the headmaster alone is authorised to administer it; and a record of cases, with details, is kept.

The question whether a pupil may legitimately be punished for offences committed outside school hours, and off the school premises, is a difficult one. The law on this point is not definite. Here again the terms of the school prospectus may help, for it may contain some definite reference to the behaviour which is expected of pupils in public. It seems, from the few cases which have come before a court, that the law would support any sensible action by a school to regulate the behaviour of its members on the way to and from school. But much discretion is called for. It might be very unwise to punish a pupil for (*e.g.*) not wearing a school cap on Sunday. Punishment for smoking in the street or disorderly behaviour in public would probably be regarded as within the school's jurisdiction. If you see some offence committed by a pupil outside the school premises, it will of course be right to check it; but one should avoid taking any summary action. It would be better to report the case to the head as soon as possible. Thus you can leave the responsibility for the punishment, if any, to him.

¹ See Bridges, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

The teacher's responsibility in class or on the playing field seems fairly definite; but difficulties may arise when the teacher is in charge of pupils in a voluntary, and not official, capacity. This may happen during the holidays, on a school journey or a foreign tour or at a school camp. Does the teacher's responsibility persist under such conditions? Probably not; but it is well to be protected against possible contingencies. If some holiday activity, of the kind indicated, is being organised by a school, it is advisable to get a formal undertaking signed by the parents of pupils concerned. It may be couched in the following terms:

I agree to let my son (daughter) attend; and I recognise that, although every reasonable care will be taken of him (her), the School can accept no legal or other responsibility with regard to him (her).

Thus the teacher in charge will be exonerated if a pupil breaks his leg or gets pneumonia or overexerts himself.¹ At the same time, it may be advisable to take out an insurance with the School Journey Association (23, Southampton Place, London, W.C.1). By this means it is not the pupil who is insured against accident and sickness, but the teacher who is covered against claims from parents in such contingencies. The responsibilities of this kind incurred by scout and guide officers in camps, etc., are fully assumed by the Boy Scout and Girl Guide Associations.

Finally there is the question of responsibility for pupils' property. The school is not responsible, unless the parent can prove gross negligence, breach of orders or fraud. Suppose, for example, the school provides no bicycle accommodation, although a large proportion of its pupils

¹ The Assistant Masters' Association issues a standard form of indemnification, and arranges for full legal protection. Members should apply for information.

have to ride in every day from a long distance. In default of a proper shed, they have to leave their machines just inside the school gate, and one is stolen. Or if a teacher is detailed, as part of his duty, to lock the cloakrooms after prayers, and forgets to do so – with the result that someone's overcoat is missing. In such cases the school might be considered responsible. A usual practice is to disclaim responsibility for pupils' property by posting a notice to this effect in the cloakrooms; and by instructing pupils to hand over any money or valuables to the care of a teacher, when clothes are changed for games or the physical education lesson. If that has been done and the charge is accepted, then the teacher is responsible; though the responsibility might be difficult to prove in a court of law. But if the teacher simply put the purse or watch down on a window-sill and then went away; or if he pretended that he had never received what had been handed over – when in fact it could be proved that he had done so – then the case against him might be sustained. The moral, however, is that it is highly advisable to do everything necessary to ensure safe custody. The best plan is to put the articles entrusted to one's care into a drawer, and then lock it.

For further reading

- C. E. Bridges, *The Teacher's Legal Handbook*.
 G. R. Barrell, *Teachers and the Law*.
 D. J. Beattie and P. S. Taylor, *The New Law of Education*, references under heading *Teachers* in Index.
 Ministry of Education, *Primary and Secondary Schools (Grant Conditions) Regulations*, 1945.

THE SCHOOL AND SOCIETY

CHAPTER 25

The school's place in the community. General, specific & vocational education

A study of educational theory should make it clear that a full definition of education must comprise the complete development of what Adams used to call the 'educand'.¹ That involves the training both of his body and of his mind – a fact which the ancient Greeks realised when they included both 'gymnastic' and 'music' in their conception of education. But the full development of personality can be achieved only through the life of the community of which the individual forms part; he is – to repeat the Aristotelian phrase – 'by nature a political animal'. Thus, as was stressed in a former chapter, a school is not merely a place for educating the mind through the instilling of knowledge or the development of habits, nor for training the body by means of games and physical exercises. It must be a place where the individual is socialised, where he acquires the habits which will enable him to live and work with others and to consider the general good, as well as his own.² He must be led through the familiar loyalties and duties of home and school to the vaguer and more difficult loyalties to the

¹ Refer to M. L. Jacks, *Total Education*.

² See *supra*, pp. 67–68.

community, the nation and mankind. If the school is an 'idealised microcosm', it must do its utmost to ensure that there is a 'transfer' – that its ideals are not shaken off by the pupils directly they leave school and emerge into the larger world. As the present writer has said elsewhere: '(The school) cannot be shut off from the greater community, like a monastery hidden in a desert or among the mountains. In order to fulfil its functions it must be closely linked with the community and be an integral part of it. Society, through the medium of the school, puts its past achievements at the service of its future citizens; but at the same time its whole future is bound up with the school. The school is, in fact, the growing-point of the community.'¹

These conceptions of the relation between the school and society have been developed by the American educationist and philosopher, John Dewey.² To him the school is a form of community life, and must provide activities involving relations with others. The discipline of the school must itself be a community enterprise; and the experiments in self-government by pupils, and alternatives to class teaching (which were described in Chapters 13 and 19) often owe much to Dewey's influence. It is noticeable that many of these experiments hail from America. By methods such as these the school 'has a chance to affiliate itself with life, to become the child's habitat, where he learns through directed living, instead of being only a place to learn lessons having an abstract reference to some possible living to be done in the future'.³

What then does the community require of the school? The dignified language of the Bidding Prayer, which is

¹ H. C. Barnard, *A History of English Education from 1760*, p. 367.

² See especially *Democracy and Education* and *The School and Society*.

³ J. Dewey, *The School and Society*, p. 15.

usually read at school and university commemorations, says: 'And that there may never be wanting a supply of fit persons to serve God in Church and State, let us pray for a blessing upon our universities, and upon all colleges and schools.' The phrase 'fit persons to serve God in Church and State' can be interpreted in a narrow or a wide sense; though 'serving God' surely includes all kinds of worthy service. But it should be noticed that the Bidding Prayer does not say 'serve the Church', or 'serve the State', as an authoritarian régime might require. It leaves us our freedom; but the only sane use of freedom is to use it in the service of God, 'Whose service is perfect freedom'.¹ How far is the community in actual practice helping the school to realise the spirit of the Bidding Prayer in the accomplishment of its aims?

A slight acquaintance with our educational history will make it plain that for a long time education in this country was organised frankly on a class basis. 'Secondary' and elementary education were shut off one from the other, and there were very few bridges between them. Secondary education, as represented by the public and grammar schools and by the more expensive private schools, was practically the monopoly of the middle and wealthy classes. Elementary education, such as was given in charity schools, dames' schools, schools of industry, monitorial schools, the schools of the two societies, and (after 1870) in aided or maintained 'elementary' schools, was associated with the poor. Even the curricula were different. Elementary education included little beyond the three 'Rs'; secondary education comprised – for boys at least – Latin and Greek, and, especially in

¹ See again, *supra*, pp. 68–69 and 70–71, and St. Peter I, 16, to which this phrase in the second collect for Morning Prayer (B.C.P.) obviously refers.

private schools, some smattering of mathematics, modern languages, and other subjects. Secondary education was associated with the payment of fees; whereas elementary education – though ‘school pence’ were often demanded – was looked upon rather as a charity bestowed on the poor, and not as a right or as a national duty.

The nineteenth century saw a gradual change in this attitude. There was a great growth of national education which culminated in the Act of 1870. Officially, at any rate, popular education increasingly came to be regarded less as a philanthropic activity, and more as a function of the State; and the curriculum of elementary schools was both widened and deepened. But it was not until after the 1902 Act that this country became possessed of anything like a national system of education, and elementary and secondary education ceased to be in two separate compartments. This process was continued and completed by the Act of 1944. It is today possible for any child, who appears to possess the necessary ability, to pass from the primary school to the particular form of academic secondary school for which he is judged to be suited, and thence to the university or some other institution of higher education – and that without any cost to his parents if they are unable to give him the necessary financial help.

This raises again the problem of the public school. It has been discussed already, but mainly as a type of educational institution. We have now to consider its position in the community. Even if it stands outside the national system of education, its influence on the nation's life is profound. According to a statement made in the House of Commons in 1944, 56% of its members had come from the public schools, whereas only 7% of the total population had been educated there. Of the members of parliament elected in

October, 1964, more than 10% were educated at one particular public school – Eton; and other schools of the same type were strongly represented.¹ It is possible that similar proportions would be found to hold good of those who occupy the highest positions in (*e.g.*) the Church, the Law, the Armed Forces, and the Civil Service. Sir Cyril Norwood (who used to be headmaster of Marlborough and afterwards of Harrow), in an article contributed to *The Spectator*, says: 'It is hard to resist the argument that a State which draws its leaders in overwhelming proportion from a class so limited as this is not a democracy, but a "demo-plutocracy", and it is impossible to hope that the classes of this country will ever be united in spirit unless their members cease to be educated in two separate systems of schools, one of which is counted as definitely inferior to the other.'²

If the community is really anxious that our schools should produce 'fit persons to serve God', it obviously cannot do so on a class basis; for God is no respecter of persons. There is no doubt whatever that we are becoming increasingly conscious of this fact – and nowhere perhaps more so than in some of the public schools themselves. The recommendations of the Fleming Committee,³ even if they have been so far implemented only to a limited extent, do at any rate suggest a way in which association between the public schools and the national system may begin. In time perhaps they may provide a solution. But even if we do not put our motives as high as the Bidding Prayer does, it is obviously a waste of a national asset if we do not make the utmost of the intellectual ability and moral force which resides in the

¹ See *The Times*, October 26th, 1964.

² C. Norwood, *The Crisis in Education*, in *The Spectator* of February 9th, 1940.

³ See *supra*, p. 61–62.

community – and that was never more true than it is at the present time. It may be that in our anxiety to abolish the system of class and privilege, which for so long held sway in English education, we are tending to concentrate now too much on the ‘average’ child, thinking that if only he is given his chance he will justify our faith in him. The result is seen in the influx of mediocre material into the universities; some of the students admitted would obviously have done better service to the State in some other capacity. At the same time, where the child has the necessary aptitude and ability – if only this can be discovered – we are agreed that he should be given the education which will enable him to profit by them to the utmost; and if that is not done there will be a waste, and the State, as well as the individual, will suffer. If the public schools can make some contribution to the avoidance of that waste, then the State should utilise them for this purpose; and it should not be content to leave them as preserves for the privileged, the well-to-do and the traditionalist. The problem, then, as yet unsolved in spite of the recommendations of the Fleming Report, is so to utilise the public school system that the charge of ‘demo-plutocratic’ tendencies may no longer be justified. The finding of a working solution to that problem is in the direct interest of the State itself.

Formerly, as was pointed out earlier in this chapter, education was determined almost entirely by social class. It was not as a rule strictly vocational, in that it did not prepare for some particular calling – though the school of industry was to a large extent a miniature factory or training school for agricultural or domestic labour. But if we can adopt, and adapt, a term suggested by Adams, it was ‘specific’.¹ It did not prepare for ‘life’ in the abstract, but

¹ See J. Adams, *Evolution of Educational Theory*, chap. VI.

for some particular kind of life. It included a basis of general education, but it had a definite orientation. Thus elementary education was not formally directed vocationally towards the life of the farm or the factory or the household, but specifically towards the life of the poorer classes. It was for this reason that the curriculum was limited to the bare essentials which they might need. Secondary education prepared for the life of those who were better off – the business or professional man, or the industrialist or the official – not vocationally, but specifically. It is the educational theorist who tries to get away from specific education to general education and to imagine a typical pupil who is educated simply as a human being and apart from the rôle which he will have to play in after life. Nowadays we try to put this into practice in the primary school, where a basis of general education is laid. It is at the secondary stage, where we have evolved differing types of school – *e.g.* modern, technical and grammar – that the principle of specific education, in a greater or less degree, is realised.

When the Hadow Committee recommended the formation of alternative types of secondary education, and was discussing in particular the curriculum of modern schools and senior classes, it was prepared to allow some bias in the third or fourth year of the course; but it said: 'This bias should be introduced only after careful consideration of local economic conditions and upon the advice of persons concerned with the local industries. It should not be of so marked a character as to prejudice the general education of the pupils'.¹ Similarly the Norwood Report states: 'At the primary stage the main preoccupation lies with basic habits, skills and aptitudes of mind, using as data the veriest elements of knowledge which all children should be put in the

¹ *The Education of the Adolescent* (Hadow Report, 1926), p. 121.

way of acquiring. . . . In the secondary stage, on the other hand, the attempt is made to provide for such special interest and aptitudes the kind of education most suited to them. . . . It is the business of secondary education, first, to provide opportunity for a special cast of mind to manifest itself, if not already manifested at the primary stage, and, secondly, to develop special interest and aptitudes to the full by means of a curriculum and a life best calculated to this end.¹ The Spens Report again advocated the formation of technical high schools 'which may develop training of such a character as (a) to provide a good intellectual discipline apart from its technical value, and (b) to have a technical value in relation not to one particular occupation but to a group of occupations'.²

It seems clear, therefore, that, speaking broadly, our system of primary education may be regarded as 'general' and that of secondary education – particularly in the modern and the technical school – as 'specific'. But it is at the post-secondary stage that education tends to narrow down and become definitely vocational or occupational. It is possible to continue specific – or even general – education at the 'further' stage; but normally it is here that the young citizen prepares for some special trade or industry or profession – *e.g.* brick-laying or book-binding or electro-welding or shorthand-typing or nursing or teaching or medicine. There is a clear difference between the aim of the modern, grammar, or technical high school, and that of the evening class or commercial college or institution of professional or vocational training or an apprenticeship or even the learning of one's 'job' in a factory or an office or a shop. But in practice the boundary between the different types of

¹ pp. 1–2.

² p. 372.

education may be a little difficult to draw; even a university course may be in essence a purely vocational one.

It is, however, pertinent to ask: 'How far is the school to concern itself with vocational, as distinct from specific, education?' Is it the duty of the secondary school, for example, to supply business firms with typists, or to run 'pre-nursing' courses? If that is done, it would imply at the same time a duty of safeguarding the specific character of the course. Adams sums up the whole matter for us when he says: 'From the practical teacher's standpoint the conclusion of the whole matter appears to be that at the earliest stages we must do everything we can to make pupils feel at home in this world, without encouraging a marked distinction between the school world and the out-of-school world; and only at the advanced stages should we begin to feel our way towards discovering special capacity for particular types of vocation'.¹ The stage in between, for which we have adopted Adams's term 'specific' includes characteristics of both types and affords a bridge from the one to the other.

For further reading

Fred Clarke, *Education and Social Change*.

Ministry of Education, *The Public Schools and the General Educational System* (Fleming Report, 1944).

J. Adams, *The Evolution of Educational Theory*, chap. vi.

¹ J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, p. 58.

CHAPTER 26

Selection for secondary education

If it is of the utmost interest to the community that the persons who serve God in Church and State are *fit* persons – *i.e.* that they are, amongst other things, placed in those positions where they will give their best service and at the same time most fully realise their own individuality – then it must have some means of selecting them. This selection will have to be done, firstly, at the stage when their general education passes into a specific one; and secondly, when they leave the latter stage and take up some form of vocational or occupational training. Normally these transitions occur at the age of 11+, and at the school-leaving age; and this fact involves a discussion, first, of the principles of transfer from primary schools to the different types of secondary school, and, secondly, of vocational or occupational guidance.

How to select children at the end of the primary stage for some form of secondary education is at once the most important and the most difficult of our administrative problems in education. It has been the subject of endless debate, of innumerable publications, and of a considerable amount of experiment. In the first place, why was the age of transfer so definitely fixed at 11+? There is a well-known purple passage in the Hadow Report which refers to the 'tide which begins to rise in the veins of youth at the age of eleven or twelve'.¹

¹ p. xix.

But this tide cannot be predicted with the precision of those listed in the *Nautical Almanac*. This 'clean-cut' age of 11+ seems to have been dictated by current practice and by administrative convenience. Even if a second chance of transfer from one type of secondary school to another at the age of 13+ is made possible, it would imply that the first two years of the course in all secondary schools, academic and non-academic alike, must be roughly the same. At that rate it would be far less trouble to effect the transfer for everybody at 13+. Again, it may be asked how far can children at the secondary stage be justifiably classified into the three 'types' described in the Norwood Report.¹ Were these, as has sometimes been suggested, drawn up *a priori* in order to fit in with an existing set-up which had been determined, not on educational grounds, but mainly by historical, political and economic conditions? Professor Sir Cyril Burt, who speaks with the greatest authority in a matter of this kind, denies the existence of the Norwood Report types, and says: 'In the interest of the nation as well as the child, the paramount need is to discover which are the ablest pupils, no matter to what school or social class they may belong, and generally to grade each child according to the relative degree of his ability, and give him the best education which his ability permits. . . . The proposed allocation of all children to different types of school at the early age of eleven cannot provide a sound psychological solution'.²

In practice, however, the selection is made at this stage, and the immediate problem is how to make it. Most local education authorities follow the suggestions laid down by the Ministry of Education in a pamphlet entitled *The*

¹ pp. 2-3.

² C. Burt, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, November 1943, p. 140.

Nation's Schools.¹ Consideration is given to 'careful records of the pupil's progress; interests and aptitudes; general objective tests of intelligence and aptitude used, if possible, more than once during the child's primary school years; enquiry into discrepancies between performance in other tests'. The most important point here is the indication that selection should not be made by one definite and final act, as used to be done by the ordinary type of special-place examination. By it numerous children were examined in competition by means (usually) of an essay or other questions in English, an arithmetic paper and an intelligence test. The candidates at the top of the list filled the vacant grammar school places, the next in order went to the central or technical school, and the remainder were drafted to modern schools. Reshuffling at the age of 13 was possible; but, for reasons already indicated, it was neither easy nor very common.

The use of standardised intelligence tests in the allocation of children to secondary education is now a recognised practice. It has even been suggested that they should form the sole means of selection. There is no doubt that in the hands of experts (real ones) they do test certain qualities such as quickness and accuracy of reasoning; yet it may be doubted whether by themselves they are adequate for the purpose of selection. For example, they do not assess certain other qualities, such as perseverance and reflectiveness, which in the long run count for a great deal – especially in the academic type of secondary education. There seems to be a tendency among some students, and even some practising teachers, to regard the I.Q. as if it were in the same category as a blood-count – *i.e.* completely objective, and quantitatively beyond question. Yet the I.Q., though it has been frequently 'standardised', is not something pro-

¹ Min. of Educ. Pamphlet No. 1, p. 26.

vided by nature herself; it is ultimately subjective. For example, it may well be that the tests which have been devised tend to give urban children an advantage over those who come from rural areas; or a test which may be suitable in America may not be suitable here. Even the I.Q. itself, as a mathematical device for expressing 'intelligence', may just possibly some day be modified, or even superseded. Psychology is a very young and quickly developing science; and it is continually changing its techniques. There is a world of difference between the approach of William James¹ and that of the modern behaviourist who juggles with the formulae of higher mathematics. It may even happen that in fifty years' time the intelligence quotient will be as obsolete in educational practice as is the opsonic index today in medicine.

Be that as it may, it is claimed that, so far as we have progressed at present, the prognostic value of the intelligence test is higher than that of the examination in English and arithmetic – though perhaps only a little higher; but that the most reliable prognostic results have been obtained from a carefully devised combination of the intelligence test with the written examination in the two school subjects.² It will be well, in any case – as the Ministry suggested – that standardised tests should be taken several times for all children during the latter part of their primary school course; and that the final scores, for the purpose of the selection examination, should be calculated from an average of these tests. There is a real danger that primary schools may attempt to coach their pupils for intelligence tests. Published collections of such exercises are available, and it is by no means unknown for candidates for secondary educa-

¹ Read his *Talks to Teachers*, first published in 1899.

² See C. W. Valentine, *The Reliability of Examinations*, p. 98.

tion to be set an 'intelligence test' each morning during their last year in the primary school. This does not appear as such on the time-table; the usual synonym is 'Scripture'.

Are any considerations, other than those furnished by the examination, to be taken into account in making the selection? There is increasing tendency to make use of 'careful records of the pupil's progress, interests and aptitudes';¹ and these should be kept at least throughout his junior school career – *i.e.* the last four years of the primary course. They should be carried on into the secondary school, and at any stage, obviously, must be regarded as strictly confidential. There are many different types of record card in use; but that for the junior school will doubtless include the results of standardised tests of intelligence, and in arithmetic and English, taken at intervals during the course. Attainment in other school subjects may also be assessed. There will be notes about school attendance and health, home circumstances, and the pupil's interests and special abilities. A periodic assessment of temperamental qualities on a five-point scale will probably be recorded. All this helps to give a much more complete picture of the child's progress in the junior school than could be obtained by examination results alone.

Another factor which may be taken into account is an interview of the pupil, usually by a very small panel of examiners. This is doubtless a highly 'subjective' type of test, and much may depend on the particular point of view of those who conduct it. However, the interview does play an important part in selection for appointments of all kinds; and it gives an opportunity for amplifying or checking information afforded by more objective methods. The Spens Report recommended that, in the selection of children for

¹ See *supra*, p. 230.

technical high schools, one of the factors should be 'the result of an interview of the child and its parent or parents, with the head of the technical high school, and a representative of the local education authority.'¹ There seems no reason why this practice should not be extended so as to cover selection for any kind of secondary education.

It is to be noted, however, that according to the 1944 Education Act, 'the Minister and the local education authorities shall have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents.'² It is pleasant to feel that after the experts and the administrators have had their say, the parent is to be allowed a 'look-in'. However, the Act elsewhere lays it down that the secondary schools in an area must offer pupils 'such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of their different ages, abilities and aptitudes'.³ Thus there might well arise a clash. A parent, it is true, may not necessarily be well qualified to decide to which form of secondary education his child would be best suited. Many parents would select a grammar school for children who, on purely educational grounds, seem better fitted for a modern school; and – such is the force of custom and class-consciousness – they would prefer to pay fees to a less efficient private school than send their offspring to a non-grammar secondary school.

From what has been said some idea may be gained of the enormous complexity of the problem of selection for secondary education. But even if some satisfactory way can

¹ p. 275.

² Section 76.

³ Section 8.

be devised for evaluating the various techniques concerned in it, and for assessing their relative importance and prognostic significance, there still remains a hard fact which may put the whole machine out of gear. It is unlikely that the number of vacancies in different types of secondary school, in a given area and in a given year, will correspond exactly with the number of children pronounced to be fitted by aptitude and ability for each category. Yet the careers of the nation's children are at stake; as Thring said, 'The waste in the teacher's workshop is in the lives of men'.¹

One of the most interesting – and most debated – solutions of this problem which have been proposed is the multilateral school. This is a single institution which provides all the secondary education of all the children in a particular area, and includes the three elements – grammar, technical and modern – in three clearly-defined sides. A variant of this is the comprehensive school, where the sides are not specifically organised as such. In either case, the pupils take some courses in common, especially in the earlier stages; though, as Professor Dent pertinently observes, 'anyone who knows the difference in intellectual capacity between an A class in a secondary grammar school and a C class in a senior elementary school of the old days must realise that it is utterly impossible to have anything approaching a common curriculum'.² However, these early years in the comprehensive school might provide an opportunity for an 'orientation' or 'diagnostic' period, such as has been suggested by the Langevin Commission in France. This proposed a *cycle d'orientation* from the age of 11 to 13, in which children would take some courses in common, but would be under constant observation. In this way a decision might be made as to

¹ G. R. Parkin, *Life and Letters of Edward Thring*, p. 218.

² H. C. Dent, *Secondary Education for All*, p. 136.

which particular specialised course they should enter at the next stage – the *cycle de détermination* – which would last till the age of 18; or whether they should go out into some apprenticeship or practical work, with a scheme of part-time general education, on the lines of our own proposed county colleges. The Spens Report decided against the multilateral school on the grounds – amongst others – that it would be too large and would contain too small a proportion of sixth form pupils. An argument often advanced in favour of the comprehensive school is that it obviates the necessity for selection at the ‘eleven-plus’ stage; but – as already indicated – some sort of selection inside the school itself will eventually be necessary. If justice is to be done alike to the quick learners and the slow learners, and if the various types of ability are to be catered for, there must be ‘streams’ and special courses even in the comprehensive school, and some means must be devised of allocating children to them.

All the same, the movement in favour of ‘comprehensive’ education has made great progress within recent years. The principle is not always argued on purely educational grounds, and political or theoretical presumptions may tend to decide the matter. It is quite possible that a government of a particular type may put pressure on local education authorities to reorganise their secondary education along comprehensive lines, or a local authority may take the initiative. Where this involves merging an existing grammar school, which may have a long history and a strong community feeling, in a new institution where it will lose its identity, there is sure to be opposition from certain quarters. Parents, for example, may feel uneasy about so radical a change. Teachers, whose training and whole experience has been in grammar school work, may find themselves – without even having been consulted – transferred to an entirely

different kind of environment with which they may not be in sympathy. Another group which is affected, but which normally is completely disregarded, is the old pupils who maintain their loyalty to their school and run flourishing 'Old ... ians' societies. They tend not unnaturally to deprecate strongly the merging of their old school in a composite type of institution where, in spite of its history and traditions, it will be completely lost. Thus the whole problem is not an easy one, and the chief danger is that drastic, far-reaching decisions may be taken on grounds of theoretical principle or administrative convenience.

There have been several other schemes put up as alternatives to the comprehensive system. One of the most interesting is the Leicestershire experiment. In this all children at the age of 11 plus are transferred without tests to a 'high school' which has a three-year course. Four or more of these high schools are grouped to serve a major grammar school. At the age of 14 any child, whose parents wish it, may be transferred to a grammar school without examination – though the meaning of the term 'grammar school' in this context cannot be that which has hitherto been usual. An alternative to this is the institution of 'junior colleges'. To these the pupils of grammar schools would be transferred as soon as they had taken the 'O' level G.C.E. examination, so that these colleges would replace the grammar school sixth form. In view of the fact that the Sixth is normally the pride of a grammar school and that its example and influence are largely responsible for the ethos of the whole community, it is obvious that such schools are not likely to view this scheme with much enthusiasm.

Yet another proposal is the 'School Base' or 'Campus School'. All schools of every type, serving a given area, are situated in close proximity to a large tract of open land,

including if possible some woodland and water. In addition to the various schools there would be craftrooms and gymnasia, a canteen and a concert room, medical inspection rooms, and perhaps even an art gallery and a chapel. There would be ample playing-fields, a swimming-bath, gardens and agricultural land. There might also be facilities for adolescent activities and adult education. On this 'base' or 'campus' each separate school or institution retains its own individuality, but there is ample opportunity for sharing staff and equipment, and all schools alike can use the basic 'plant'. The transport needed to bring the pupils from the contributory areas could be provided by special buses or rail-cars.

The real need is for local education authorities to experiment widely with different types of secondary school organisation; and – equally important – to allow their teachers plenty of freedom to experiment. But, as has been suggested, it seems a pity in so doing to abolish institutions which have a live, corporate feeling and are doing distinguished work, so that their individuality is lost. Perhaps the best place for trying out these schemes is in the new housing estates where one can start *de novo*, and where it will not be necessary to engulf or amalgamate or mutilate well-established schools, each with its special characteristics and community traditions. As Professor H. C. Dent has said, 'There will be in England and Wales no uniformity in the provision of facilities for secondary education. This is as it should be, for no one knows yet how best to organise secondary education for all; and such a solution clearly demands experiment on the widest and most varied scale.'¹

¹ H. C. Dent, *Secondary Education for All*, p. 150.

For further reading

- J. Adams, *Modern Developments in Educational Practice*, chapters III and IV.
- W. McClelland, *Selection for Secondary Education*.
- D. M. McIntosh, *Promotion from Primary to Secondary Education*.
- A. F. Watts and P. Slater, *The Allocation of Primary School Leavers to Courses of Secondary Education*.
- J. B. T. Davies and G. A. Jones, *The Selection of Children for Secondary Education*.
- National Union of Teachers, *Transfer from Primary to Secondary Schools*.
- P. E. Vernon, *Intelligence Testing; its use in selection for secondary education* (pamphlet).
- Ministry of Education, *Organisation of Secondary Education* (Circular 144, 1947) – Reprinted in Wells and Taylor, *The New Law of Education* (3rd edition), p. 594.
- C. M. Fleming, *Cumulative Records*.
- Lady Simon, *Three Schools or One?*
- R. Pedley, *Comprehensive Education*.
- English New Education Fellowship, *The Comprehensive School*.
- S. W. Mason, *The Leicestershire Experiment and Plan*.
- J. H. Whitehouse, *The School Base*.

CHAPTER 27

Vocational and occupational guidance

The problem of finding for the school-leaver a career best fitted to his aptitudes and ability arises towards the end of the stage of specific education. Until recent times the matter was often left to chance; but it resulted in many square pegs being put into round holes, and the State, as well as the individuals concerned, suffered as a result. Dr. P. D. Innes says: 'It is impossible to estimate the amount of the waste of money spent on children in the schools which follows from industrial misfits or from entry into work that is below the children's ability or which is uncongenial'.¹ It is to counteract this tendency that systems of vocational or occupational guidance have been devised. A complete scheme of this kind would imply not only guiding the school-leaver into that particular occupation where he will find his greatest interest and realise his capabilities to the utmost, giving him information as to the nature of his duties and opportunities, and the knowledge and training required if he is to take up such work;² but it would also necessitate ascertaining the state of the labour market and the chances of a particular school-leaver obtaining the post for which he is best suited. Thus there are at least three elements involved in guidance — a psychological study of the individual, advice to him

¹ N.U.T. pamphlet *Choice of Employment*.

² There is a helpful table, giving details of the training required for various occupations, in Chamber's *Encyclopaedia*, Vol. XIV, pp. 359-62.

on the nature of the type of job for which he should apply and information as to the kind of training which may be needed, and a knowledge of what openings are available. It is not always easy to make these details fit together, and in the end some kind of compromise may be necessary. It must also be remembered that, when a large selection of candidates is available, the employer – or institution of further education – is able to select those who, in competition, appear to be best qualified and most promising. All this means that vocational or occupational guidance is a hardly less complicated business than selection for secondary education.

The State itself by its agencies has done something to deal with this problem. In 1909 labour exchanges were set up, and these included juvenile departments. In the following year the Education (Choice of Employment) Act enabled local education authorities to give boys and girls information, advice and assistance with regard to the choice of employment; and to this end juvenile employment committees were appointed. These included representatives of industry, educationists and social workers. Some local education authorities opened juvenile employment bureaux; and both they and the juvenile departments of labour exchanges were much used. A scheme furnished by the Employment and Training Act of 1948 enabled the Minister of Labour and National Service to make arrangements with the Minister of Education and the Secretary of State for the 'establishment of a comprehensive youth employment service'.¹ It provided for the setting-up of youth employment committees; and the Minister might require schools to furnish 'particulars relating to the health, ability, educational attainments and aptitudes'² of their leavers.

¹ Section 7.

² Section 13.

The part which the school may play in vocational guidance is indicated in some suggestions which have been put forward by the National Institute of Industrial Psychology,¹ and which may be summarised as follows: In every school there should be someone whose recognised duties include the vocational guidance of children. His functions will comprise the discussion of cases with his colleagues and the use (if possible) of school records; the testing by 'special methods' of the child's specific abilities, and temperamental and character traits; the obtaining from the school medical service of information as to his health and physical development; the interviewing of parents concerning vocational plans for their children. The careers master could be assisted by a visiting adviser or organiser who is 'expert in all aspects of vocational guidance'. This official would train the careers masters in his district by means of lectures, conferences, demonstrations or tutorials; he would plan the scheme of examination, record-forms, and details relative to the advising of the child; and he would, if necessary, assist the careers master in his examinations.

The National Institute of Industrial Psychology, which would apparently co-ordinate the work of these advisers and the careers masters with whom they collaborated, has already in operation a scheme which can be applied in the case of individual school-leavers. It tends to be an expensive process and for that reason to be confined very largely to pupils leaving grammar or public schools. Its techniques are roughly as follows: Before the actual test, which is carried out at the office of the Institute, questionnaires are filled in by the candidate himself, by his parent, and by the authorities of his school. The examination itself begins with a simple mechanical aptitude test in order to settle the candidate

¹ See F. M. Earle, *Methods of Choosing a Career*, Appendix I.

down; and this is not counted in the result. Then there is a short talk with the candidate on some subject with which he is familiar. This is followed by an intelligence test of the ordinary kind and a more difficult practical constructional test. Next comes a fairly long interview covering all the topics of importance which have emerged from the questionnaires; and in this conversation full consideration is given to the candidates' own ideas and point of view. On the result of these combined tests – which may last three hours – a report is drawn up. It may quite possibly be negative – *i.e.* it may point out occupations for which the candidate is *not* suitable; or recommendations may be made for several types of suitable job, because one outstanding ideal type is rarely indicated. From evidence obtained by a follow-up investigation it appears that this scheme of vocational guidance is highly successful.

A method which deals only with isolated, and perhaps privileged individuals, even if successful, does not carry us very far; and for that reason experiments with groups of school-leavers are, for our purpose, more important. An attempt in this direction was made under the direction of Dr. (now Sir) Cyril Burt in 1923, when 100 children from three London 'elementary' schools were dealt with and followed up. The experiment was on a small scale, but the results achieved were distinctly encouraging. Another investigation¹ – this time with a group of 600 school-children in North London – was carried out in 1925–6 by the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, with the help of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. There were no 'superior schools', but on the other hand there were none extremely poor. The subsequent careers of the children tested and advised were followed up over a period varying

¹ It is fully described in F. M. Earle, *op. cit.*

from two and a half to four years; and their success or failure was noted in relation to the advice given and taken. This group was also compared with a control group of 600 pupils who had not been examined and advised, but who were similarly followed up. It was clearly established that: (i) boys and girls whose work is in closest agreement with that advised tend to keep their posts longer, to give greater satisfaction to their employers and to be more satisfied themselves, than when their work is less closely related to that advised; (ii) in regard to recommended occupations boys and girls of the experimental group keep their jobs longer and give greater satisfaction to their employers and to themselves than those in the control group; (iii) vocational guidance *can* improve the choice of occupations and promote greater success in them.¹

The London experiments were followed by a research into the value of vocational tests as aids to the choice of employment carried out by the City of Birmingham local education authority. It employed two trained investigators to do this work, and their object was to find whether 'certain tests for estimating particular aptitudes and qualities required in industry could be put to practical use in advising boys and girls in their choice of careers'.² A follow-up two years later showed that children who had received and followed the advice based on this testing were more satisfactorily placed than those who had not had this advantage; and it was recommended that consideration should be given to the practicability of using vocational testing as an aid to the Juvenile Employment Officer.

It seems then that we have enough evidence to show that vocational guidance, conducted along the lines which have

¹ See F. M. Earle, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

² Reese Edwards, *Vocational and Occupational Guidance*, p. 26.

been described, has a very real value. If the techniques, which have apparently justified themselves in these and similar experiments, are to be used on a much larger scale in future they will have to be applied by persons whose training has been comparatively unspecialised; and this emphasises the importance of the National Institute's proposal for the appointment of area advisers to help the careers masters who would carry out the bulk of the actual guidance work with individual school leavers. It also implies greater attention than has hitherto been possible to guidance techniques on the part of the staffs of the 'comprehensive youth employment service' brought into being by the 1948 Employment and Training Act. Yet, however successful the experiments and however skilfully the techniques are applied, there is no guarantee of automatic success. Much, for example, must depend on the state of the labour market and the jobs of a particular type which are available at any given time. As Mr. Reese Edwards says again: 'Vocational guidance cannot entirely eliminate competition between individuals in their industrial and commercial pursuits. Competition will always exist. Even with guidance, some will prosper, others will fail. Indeed, it is very difficult to imagine a world in which the majority succeed. A certain equilibrium exists about these matters. With or without guidance, success and failure will both exist. For these terms are relative. Guidance may alter the level of failure or success. It may lead to a higher all-round level of efficiency, but within this level, relative failures and successes will still occur.'¹

It is further to be noted that the application of a really comprehensive scheme of vocational and occupational guidance presupposes the whole-hearted co-operation of the

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 106.

public at large — and that, as things are, can hardly be taken for granted. There will always be the school-leaver who goes into a job, which would be pronounced unsuitable, because of influence exerted by his parents, or because a present advantage appears to outweigh the possibility of a greater one in future, or because of economic pressure, or simply through inertia or lack of intelligence. Yet the whole matter is of so great importance to the well-being of the whole community that it can hardly be left to chance. As has been indicated, much has been done during the past few decades to work out effective techniques of guidance; it remains now for them to be applied on a much larger scale than hitherto, and for still further experiment to be made.

For reference

- Sir Cyril Burt, *A Study in Vocational Guidance*.
 F. M. Earle, *Methods of Choosing a Career*.
 F. M. Earle, *Psychology and the Choice of a Career*.
 G. H. Chaffe and P. J. Edmonds, *Careers Encyclopedia*.
 H. Heginbotham, *The Youth Employment Service*.
 C. A. Oakley and A. Macrae, *Handbook of Vocational Guidance*.
 Reese Edwards, *Vocational and Occupational Guidance*.
 P. I. Kitchen, *From Learning to Earning*.
 Publications of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology,
 14, Welbeck Street, London, W.1.
 Employment and Training Act, 1948 (Pt. II).

CHAPTER 28

Education for citizenship

In the last two chapters we have been concerned with the function of the school in fitting the pupil for the particular work in which he will find the greatest satisfaction for himself, and at the same time will serve the community most effectively. But it need hardly be said that schools do not exist solely in order to train their pupils for 'jobs', whether specifically or vocationally. It is certainly one of their functions, and the rather 'highbrow' attitude, which suggests that this is not the case, is a mistaken one. But it is a truth, as well as a truism, that a school should prepare its pupils for life, and not merely for earning a living. It must afford a training for complete citizenship; and for this reason education must be a matter of vital concern for the State. Civilised nations have given up the idea that it is something which the individual can have or not have, just as he pleases. The right of society, acting through the machinery of the State, to compel a certain amount of attendance at school, is now unquestioned.

In a well-known passage in the *Politics*,¹ the Greek philosopher Aristotle points out that it is natural for man to live as a member of a State in association with other men. Isolation is possible only for a god or a wild beast. The 'good life' can be realised only in society. By concerning itself with education the State achieves one means – and a

¹ I, 2.

very important means – of securing the ‘good life’ of its members. It is worth noting that legislation in this country, relating to compulsory education, arose not simply because the State felt that children ought to be *educated*, but out of a much wider movement for ensuring the physical, intellectual and moral well-being of the nation’s children. State intervention in English education was first applied on behalf of factory children in the Health and Morals of Apprentices Act (1802). It restricted working hours, prohibited night work, enforced hygienic conditions in factories – and *inter alia* it laid down that workhouse apprentices in cotton and woollen mills should receive some elementary instruction and be taken to church. Most of the early Factory Acts also included some reference to the education of young workers, and the school provisions were part of general legislation to improve the conditions of child-labour in industry. That is to say, they were an attempt – feeble and half-hearted though it may have been – to realise the ‘good life’ for those members of society to whom they applied.

Contemporary theories of individualism and *laissez-faire* resisted these attempts. It was said – and even believed – that if things were left alone and a minimum of State intervention was assured then the best results would follow. Herbert Spencer, for example, would leave national education entirely to private enterprise. On the other hand we have seen – and still see – national systems of education used, in totalitarian régimes of various types, to crush out individual opinion, initiative and freedom. But in a modern democratic country neither of these methods would be regarded as the best way of training its future citizens. If the State does exist to make possible the ‘good life’ – and we can perhaps best interpret that as self-realisation in service – the citizen must not only share in that life, but must also contribute towards

it. How then is the school to help him to make this contribution?

One answer, at any rate, lies in the life of the school itself, as we have tried to conceive it; because it, too, like the State itself, exists to secure the 'good life' of its members. But the point at issue raises the whole question of 'education for citizenship'. It is sometimes suggested that lessons in civics and economics have a special efficacy in this direction; and that for this reason schools should give more attention to such subjects. A great deal has been done by the Association for Education in Citizenship to implement this belief. In its publication *Education for Citizenship in Secondary Schools* detailed suggestions and syllabuses are given to show not only how history, geography, and economics, and public affairs can be utilised as training in citizenship, but that even classics, modern languages, mathematics, science, art and domestic subjects may contribute to this end. There is no doubt that a 'self-contained' treatment of school subjects, with no carry-over into real life, falls far short of what can and should be achieved. Reference has already been made several times to this fact. But something more is needed than mere information. It is quite possible that a pupil may know how M.P.s are elected and how the country is governed, may be conversant with current problems in internal and international affairs, and may even have learnt all the duties and responsibilities of a member of a democracy – and yet turn out to be a bad citizen. Similarly, a knowledge of Christian teaching does not necessarily imply putting it into practice. In such cases there may be a carry-over; but there is no guarantee of this. Citizenship, therefore, can never be simply a school 'subject', nor can there be in any narrow, time-table sense 'education for citizenship'. All good and right education should ultimately be education for citizenship.

The issue, then, is less simple than it might seem. So far as classroom instruction is concerned it may be that education for citizenship should be rather a matter of attitude and approach, than of syllabus. Anything which encourages clear and accurate thinking, which helps the pupil to weigh evidence and to be critical about propaganda, is, in so far, an education in the right kind of citizenship. Anything which gives him information which will assist him to realise his duties and responsibilities as a citizen, is of the greatest value, once the will to exercise them is there. As has been said, the practice of these civic virtues may, and should, begin in the life of the school itself; but the chief danger is that citizenship here and citizenship in the wider life afterwards may be shut off one from the other. It may even be doubted whether community service to the school leads in itself to habits of public service. The boy or girl who has proved an excellent school prefect, with a full sense of corporate responsibility, does not always afterwards take the greatest share in the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in the community in which he or she lives. If we can learn a lesson from what the psychologists tell us about the transfer of training, it would appear that to effect the carry-over that we need there must be a conscious recognition of common elements, and interest or enthusiasm as a motive power.

There is here, however, a real danger under modern conditions because the influence of the larger community outside the school may do much to counteract the values for which it stands, and there is often little 'carry-over'. In this respect we may perhaps envy Communist countries, however much we may dislike the political system for which they stand and the methods of indoctrination which they practise. As a completely objective observer has said of the U.S.S.R., 'There is no religion in the schools. But the teacher does not

have to contend with the vulgarity of commercialised mass-media, the streets are not full of shrieking advertisements appealing to the crudest acquisitive and snobbish impulses, and indeed education seems to be impelled by a sense of earnestness that might give Britain and America cause for serious thought.¹ So, as was said above, the school should be oriented towards 'the world we should love to have'.² One of the best ways of doing that would be for every school to carry out definite schemes of social service as part of its normal activities. A very interesting and enlightening account of such schemes in action is given in the pamphlet *Experiments in Practical Training for Citizenship*, published by the Association for Education in Citizenship. It describes experiments conducted in several well-known schools, including Bishop Wordsworth's at Salisbury, Bryanston, Abbotsholme, and Kurt Hahn's school at Gordonstoun. One of the most notable contributions to the pamphlet is that by Mr. (now Professor) C. H. Dobinson. It deals with the Community Service Corps at King Edward's Grammar School, Five Ways, Birmingham. Membership of this body was open to any member of the school, and a voluntary cadet corps was organised as part of it. Inside the school the Community Service Corps provided classes in such subjects as first-aid, life-saving, local government and international affairs. Service to the school community itself took such forms as painting the cricket pavilion, or digging waste land at the back of the school and converting it into a garden. Outside the school there were visits to distressed areas, hospitals, and public utility undertakings; and there were

¹ L. Elvin, *Morality and Education*, p. 16. See also *Communist Education* (ed. E. J. King,) pp. 98-9.

² See *supra*, p. 65, and refer also to p. 48.

cycling and hiking expeditions abroad and in this country during the holidays.

But most significant of all, because of its possible carry-over value, were actual works of 'voluntary social enterprise', done for the benefit of the community. For example, toys were made for crippled children, help was given on allotments and in converting waste land into a recreation ground, senior boys worked in Christmas Holiday Play Centres in one of the poorest districts of the city; others assisted with the running of boys' clubs. These social service activities, carried on by King Edward's School, Five Ways, Birmingham, were developed also in other schools in the city. The result was the formation of a Secondary Schools Voluntary Service Society. A clearing house for such work was set up at King Edward's School, with an honorary secretary, whose duty it was to keep in touch with suitable activities and to co-ordinate the whole scheme. The underlying principle of this voluntary service was 'one of work without reward for the individual who needs help, for the cause which is spiritual. It is non-political and non-sectarian and aims at breaking-down prejudices between man and man and class and class'.¹ That is a principle which also underlies the Scout and Guide movement, and it is important that it should be brought into the life and organisation of the school. The war of 1939-45 provided a powerful stimulus to social service and the schools responded whole-heartedly and in many different ways. An interesting example is afforded by the 'Youth Squads', which were organised in Suffolk in order to encourage young people on their own initiative to undertake jobs of national importance. The need and the significance of such community service on the part of schools are no less in peace-time than in war.

¹ *Experiments in practical Training for Citizenship.* (A.E.C.)

It is along lines such as those which have been described, then, that the school may attempt to translate a knowledge of civic duty, and the practice of it inside the school itself, into active service to the outside community. But such service must never be regarded in a narrow sense. Nationalism in education is as dangerous as nationalism in politics; and therefore the school has the further duty of fostering a wider citizenship than that of the immediate neighbourhood, or even of the nation. This can doubtless be based on giving information and developing imagination about foreign countries – and there are endless opportunities, both incidental and explicit, for doing so in almost every subject of the curriculum. But here again, active measures are needed lest the matter remain on the purely intellectual level. Even an exchange of correspondence with schoolchildren in foreign countries will help to encourage the interest which will contribute towards a real understanding. Better still is an exchange of pupils. A school known to the writer received for a month each year a number of boys from a school of a similar type in Germany, and from another in Belgium. They stayed in the families of pupils of the English school and took part freely in its activities. At the end of the month the hosts returned home with their continental friends and spent another month in the foreign country, this time as guests. Such an experiment is typical of what has been done in many other cases. Interchange of pupils, and of teachers too, is one of the most hopeful ways of effecting education in world citizenship. There is no need to stress the importance of such efforts under present-day conditions. Education will not of itself banish our international tensions and misunderstandings and suspicions; but it might, if properly interpreted and put into practice, do something towards that end. For the right kind of education seeks the good, and not the

ill, of others. In endeavouring to resist evil by evil we run the risk of being overcome by it. But for the teacher St. Paul's words should have a special significance: 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.'

For further reading

J. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*.

M. L. Jacks, *Total Education* (especially chapter VII).

R. Livingstone, *Education for a World Adrift*.

Publications of The Association for Education in Citizenship,
14, Kendall Place, London, W.1.

L. J. F. Brimble, *Social Studies and World Citizenship*.

C. H. Dobinson (ed.), *Education in a Changing World* (ch. V).

H. Wyatt, *Young People Abroad*.

Unesco - pamphlets entitled *Towards World Understanding*.

Publications of The Council for Education in World Citizenship,
25, Charles Street, London, W.1.

Appendix

Some suggested books dealing with the teaching of special subjects

ENGLISH

- I.A.A.M., *The Teaching of English*.
Board of Education, *The Teaching of English in England*.
P. B. Ballard, *Teaching the Mother Tongue*.
P. B. Ballard, *Teaching and Testing English*.
W. S. Tomkinson, *The Teaching of English*.
V. de S. Pinto, *The Teaching of English in Schools*.
W. H. Mason, *The Teaching of English*.
M. M. Lewis, *Language in School*.
P. Hartog, *Words in Action*.
R. Bennett, *Practical Speech Training for Schools*.
R. G. Ralph, *The Library in Education*.

MODERN LANGUAGES

- I.A.A.M. Memorandum on *The Teaching of Modern Languages*.
O. Jespersen, *How to Teach a Foreign Language*.
V. Mallinson, *Teaching a Modern Language*.
E. C. Kittson, *Theory and Practice of Language Teaching*.
D. H. Stott, *Language Teaching in the New Education*.
Scottish Education Department, *Modern Languages in Secondary Schools*.

CLASSICS

- Classical Association, *On the Teaching of Latin and Greek*.
I.A.A.M., *The Teaching of Classics*.

APPENDIX

Board of Education pamphlet (No. 116), *Suggestions for the Teaching of Classics.*

L. W. P. Lewis, *Practical Hints on the Teaching of Latin.*

C. W. Valentine, *Latin, Its Place and Value in Education.*

W. H. S. Jones, *The Teaching of Latin.*

HISTORY

I.A.A.M. Memorandum on *The Teaching of History.*

A. C. F. Beales, *A Guide to the Teaching of History in Schools.*

W. H. Burston, *Principles of History Teaching.*

W. H. Burston and C. W. Green, *Handbook for History Teachers.*

F. C. Happold, *The Approach to History.*

F. R. Worts, *The Teaching of History in Schools.*

M. W. Keatinge, *Studies in the Teaching of History.*

R. J. Unstead, *Teaching History in the Junior School.*

E. K. Milliken, *Handwork Methods in the Teaching of History.*

GEOGRAPHY

I.A.A.M. Memorandum on *The Teaching of Geography.*

Scottish Education Department, *Geography in Secondary Schools.*

M. Long (ed.), *Handbook for Geography Teachers.*

W. H. Barker, *Geography in Education and Citizenship.*

H. C. Barnard, *Principles and Practice of Geography Teaching.*

G. H. Gopsill, *The Teaching of Geography.*

B. J. Garnier, *Practical Work in Geography.*

MATHEMATICS

I.A.A.M. Memorandum on *The Teaching of Mathematics.*

Mathematical Association, *Reports on the teaching of various mathematical subjects.*

Scottish Education Department, *Mathematics in Secondary Schools.*

C. Godfrey and A. W. Siddons, *The Teaching of Elementary Mathematics.*

APPENDIX

MATHEMATICS (continued)

- Irving Adler, *The New Mathematics*.
W. W. Sawyer, *Prelude to Mathematics*.
W. L. Sumner, *The Teaching of Arithmetic and Elementary Mathematics*.
T. P. Nunn, *The Teaching of Algebra (including Trigonometry)*.
P. B. Ballard, *Teaching the Essentials of Arithmetic*.

SCIENCE

- I.A.A.M. Memorandum on *The Teaching of Science*.
Science Masters' Association, *The Teaching of General Science*.
Science Masters' Association *Science Masters' Book* (several volumes dealing with separate Sciences).
F. W. Westaway, *Science Teaching*.
W. L. Sumner, *The Teaching of Science*.
G. Nunn, *Handbook for Science Teachers in Secondary Modern Schools*.
Nuffield Foundation, *Physics: Teachers Guide* (5 vols).
K. Laybourn and C. H. Bailey, *Teaching Science to the Ordinary Pupil*.
N. F. Newbury, *The Teaching of Chemistry*.
Volumes in the *Science Masters' Book Series*
Unesco, *Source Book for Science Teaching*.
Cyril Bibby, *Sex Education*.
Ministry of Education (Pamphlet 119), *Sex Education in Schools and Youth Organisations*.

RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

- G. L. Heawood, *Religion in School*.
R. L. Arundale, *Religious Education in the Senior School*.
B. A. Yeaxlee, *Handbook to the Cambridgeshire Syllabus of Religious Teaching for Schools*.
B. L. Kennett, *The Teaching of Scripture to Elder Pupils in Secondary Day Schools*.
M. Avery, *Teaching Scripture*.
F. H. Hilliard, *The Teacher and Religion*.

APPENDIX

FINE ART

- Ministry of Education pamphlet (No. 6), *Art Education*.
J. M. Horne, *The Art Class in Action*.
W. M. Ackroyd, *Art in the Classroom*.
Evelyn Gibbs, *The Teaching of Art in Schools*.
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